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**"I do so admire your persistence.
Ready to die?"**

—The Inquisitor, *Star Wars Rebels*, 2014

From the opening moments of *A New Hope*, right up to *Star Wars Rebels*, the *Star Wars* saga has been responsible for introducing us to some of the greatest villains of all time. But what makes a great bad guy? They need to look the part, of course. Can you imagine a Sith Ewok or an Imperial Jawa? No, me neither. They should be able to speak the part—all raspy and deep-voiced. And they certainly should act the part. Destroying planets and choking enemies (or even colleagues who happen to disagree) is most certainly in. Most crucially for a villain, I think, is that they must give the impression that they can inflict real loss on our heroes. In short, we need to believe that the bad guys can sense of that in *Rebels*. The forces of darkness have rarely seemed so powerful—don't forget that the galaxy is under the control of the Emperor and his cruel Empire.

The most recent villain to join the *Star Wars* pantheon of evil is the mysterious Inquisitor. He is a brilliantly realized new threat who backs up his strength and dexterity with a keen intellect and methodical approach to taking down his foes. Even though experience tells me the good guys will come through in the end, I'm telling you, I genuinely fear for the rebels!

Who's your favorite *Star Wars* villain? Don't forget to write in to the addresses to the left. We'd love to hear from you! Don't forget, we'll send out an amazing Official Pix signed photo for every letter we use!

May the Force
be with you...
Always.

Jonathan Wilkins
Jonathan Wilkins,
Editor

STAR WARS

DECEMBER 2014

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REPUBLIC

THIS ISSUE....

"THE MORE YOU TIGHTEN YOUR GRIP, TARKIN, THE MORE STAR SYSTEMS WILL SLIP THROUGH YOUR FINGERS."—LEIA ORGANA, *STAR WARS: EPISODE IV A NEW HOPE*



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ALL THE COOL NEWS FROM THE *STAR WARS* UNIVERSE

REBELS REPORT!

AS SEASON 1 CONTINUES, HERE ARE
THE LATEST DETAILS FOR WHAT'S
COMING UP!

**EPISODE 107:
"BREAKING RANKS"**

Directed by Steven G. Lee
Written by Greg Weisman

**EPISODE 108:
"OUT OF DARKNESS"**

Directed by Steward Lee
Written by Kevin Hopps

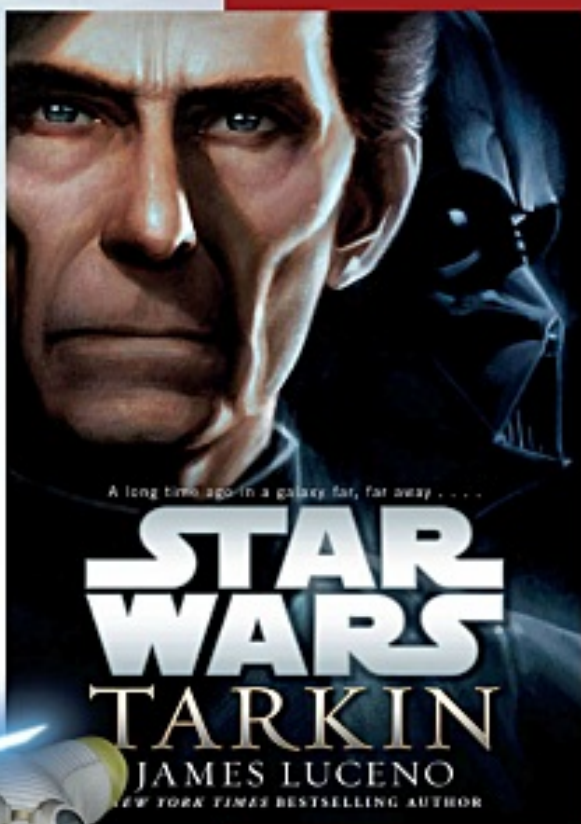
**EPISODE 109:
"EMPIRE DAY"**

Directed by Steven G. Lee
Written by Henry Gilroy

**EPISODE 110:
"GATHERING FORCES"**

Directed by Steward Lee
Written by Greg Weisman





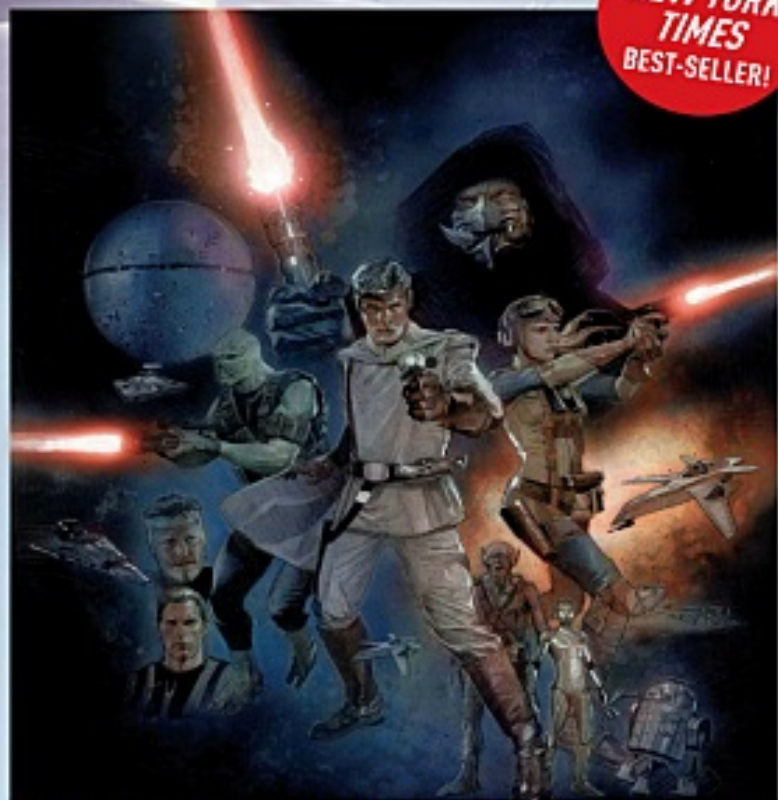
TAKE HOME TARKIN!

Thanks to our friends at Del Rey, we have 5 posters to give away! They feature David Smit's cover art for *Tarkin* on one side, and Joe Corroney and Brian Miller's art from page 50 of this very issue on the other!

To get your hands on this poster—that was first given away at New York Comic Con—please write to the address on page 3, with the subject header "Foul Stench!"

Don't let this one "slip through your fingers!"

#1
NEW YORK
TIMES
BEST-SELLER!



HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED THE STAR WARS?

The *Star Wars* trade paperback collects issues 1-8 of the official adaptation of George Lucas's 1974 rough-draft screenplay for what would become *Star Wars*. There are familiar places and characters, but not as seen in the movies! Experience the adventures of Annikin Starkiller, Princess Leia, and Han Solo for the first time!

To celebrate this collection, we have 5 copies of the trade paperback to give away, courtesy of our friends at Titan Books. Simply send your name and address, either by email or post, to the address on page 3 by December 14.

The *Star Wars* is available from Dark Horse Comics (USA) and Titan Books (UK).



ROBIN WILLIAMS AND STAR WARS

By Jimmy "Mac" McInerney

Robin Williams... Original, lively and dynamic. A rapid-fire comic wit executed with blazing fast reflexes. Frantic when necessary, thoughtful when appropriate, and always razor sharp. The loss of his talent and personality is immeasurable.

In a 2011 interview with *Moviefone*, Robin Williams explained how *Star Wars* influenced the makers of *Happy Days* to introduce a character from space into the popular sitcom. Here's what Williams recalled: "Mork came from [Mork and Mindy producer] Garry Marshall's kid who saw *Star Wars*, and said, 'Dad, why can't they have an alien on *Happy Days*?' I think he did it as kind of a shout-out to his son, as a one-off thing, and, I guess, because it was just so strange."

I came across this photo a few years ago... A photo of Robin Williams with C-3PO! The questions immediately started racing through my head. "What?



When? Where?" I had to learn more, so I contacted Pete Vilmur at Lucasfilm to see what he knew. I was surprised to find out Pete had no idea. So I decided to go straight to the man himself, Anthony Daniels. Within minutes, I received this response from the talent behind everyone's favorite protocol droid:

"I was fascinated to have this reminder of a lovely experience in LA, I think. We were taking part in a film sequence for a charity event called Hands Across America. I cannot remember the date, but both Robin and I are looking rather young, so it must have been about 20 years ago or more. I don't think any other artist has made me laugh so much in rehearsal. Robin was a delight and I have been a fan of his ever since because of that one experience. I was interested when he played the *Bicentennial Man* because it raised all sorts of philosophical questions around robotics and humanity. I have never met him again, but Robin was one of the most entertaining, intelligent, and friendly humans I have ever met. Thank you for bringing a part of my past into my present."

So just like that, the mystery of the one and only encounter between Robin Williams and C-3PO was solved thanks to the amazing recall of Anthony Daniels.

STAR WARS GAMERS PREFER THE DARK SIDE!

Star Wars: Commander is the latest free-to-play Star Wars game. In the game, players can choose to command the Rebel Alliance or the Galactic Empire.

The game has been downloaded over 5 million times since it launched on August 21. According to Disney Interactive, the majority of gamers (52.4 percent) chose to play on the side of Darth Vader, Emperor Palpatine, and the Galactic Empire. Interestingly, countries in the Northern Hemisphere were more likely to align with the Empire, while those in South America,

Africa, and India generally supported the Rebel Alliance.

The United States overall showed a preference for the Galactic Empire, which was chosen by 52.7 percent of all US gamers. The rebels have one stronghold in the USA, however, with the good folk of North Dakota opting to take the hero's path!

MORE TO SAY

Star Wars: Commander is available on iTunes now!

HAVE YOU?



LAUNCH PAD



REMEMBERING JOE VISKOCIL

Joe Viskocil, the pyrotechnic expert who worked on the first two Star Wars films and earned an Oscar for his visual effects wizardry on *Independence Day*, has died. He was 63.

Viskocil assisted John Dykstra and the Industrial Light & Magic team to create the spectacular explosion of the Death Star at the climax of *A New Hope*. He then returned for *Star Wars: Episode V The Empire Strikes Back* (1980). Viskocil shared his Oscar with Volker Engel, Douglas Smith and Clay Pinney for Roland Emmerich's *Independence Day* (1996), which features iconic scenes of aliens destroying international monuments, including the White House.

Star Wars Insider would like to offer our condolences to Joe's family and friends.



Above: Viskocil (left) and Joe Johnston wrangle an X-wing. Below: Viskocil (in sunglasses) prepares a shot of the Death Star trench run.



C-3PO'S COMMUNICATION STATION!

WELCOME TO *STAR WARS INSIDER*'S LETTERS PAGE! WRITE IN WITH AN ENTERTAINING LETTER, AND, IF WE PRINT IT, WE'LL SEND YOU A FANTASTIC SIGNED *STAR WARS* PHOTO FROM OUR FRIENDS AT OFFICIAL PIX!

GIRL POWER

Thank you so much for the brilliant article focusing on the *Star Wars* female fanbase in *Star Wars Insider* issue 151—it's about time! It was really interesting to read how *Star Wars* has



Star Wars Insider #151 inspired many readers to write in!

appealed to girls since its start with strong role models and cool merchandise! I would have loved to have owned some Princess Leia underoos when I was younger!

I got into the saga when the prequels were first released and then continued being a fan by watching *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*. The cool thing is that I've always felt catered for by *Star Wars*; I've always felt included. Female characters throughout the franchise are strong characters who can hold their own amongst the guys. From Leia to Padmé to Ashoka and Hera—and dare I say Daisy Ridley's character in Episode VII—these are ladies who we can aspire to be like. *Star Wars* is for everybody!

—Caroline Hill, by email

Thanks for the kind words, Caroline! You weren't the only person to write in to comment on the article though...

I LOVE LEIA

I just wanted to say "thank you" to everyone at *Star Wars Insider* for including such a lovely article about how women have been a part of the *Star Wars* experience. I have been a *Star Wars* fan since day one. I can remember standing in line to see the very first movie (even before it was called *A New Hope*!).

As a kid growing up, we had never seen a heroine as cool as Leia. She was smart, sassy, independent—and in charge! Sure, she is held captive, but look at how



Princess Leia, a role model for countless fans!

she acts when she's captive! She really holds her own and as soon as she's busted out of her cell by Luke, Han, and Chewie, she starts ordering them around! We had NEVER seen anything like that, and, believe me, it made me feel great to see that.

As much as I enjoyed the article, you did make a mistake! The section on the women who have shaped the saga left out the ladies who are appearing in Episode VII, including Daisy Ridley, Lupita Nyong'o, and Gwendoline Christie.—Claudia Bright, New York

Very true, Claudia! We can't wait to see what effect these ladies have on the next generation of *Star Wars* fans!



Padmé carried on the tradition of strong female characters in the *Star Wars* saga!

OOPSI!

Well, *Star Wars Insider* has really made me rethink my attitudes to the saga. I've always thought *Star Wars* was a "guy" thing that some girls like. I was wrong!

There's a stereotype that got passed on from generations before where female characters really were weak and needed to be rescued a lot. It really never occurred to me that *Star Wars* could appeal to both boys and girls on such a large scale! So, to my fellow fans I want to say, "sorry!"—Robin Younger, Oklahoma

Thanks for writing in, Robin—we're glad that you've changed your mind!

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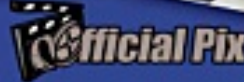
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DAVE ON THE DARK SIDE



STAR WARS JUST ISN'T STAR WARS WITHOUT BAD GUYS ATTACKING THE HEROES! EXECUTIVE PRODUCER DAVE FILONI DISCUSSES WHY *REBELS'* VILLAINS ARE NO EXCEPTION. INTERVIEW BY JONATHAN WILKINS

Star Wars Insider: Fans could be forgiven for expecting Darth Vader to be the main antagonist of the show. Why did you cast the Inquisitor as the lead villain?

Dave Filoni: I understand the instinct to say that Darth Vader should be the villain. We have always been told the storyline that he helped the Empire hunt down and destroy the Jedi Knights. But when you look back at it, Vader is such a large character now. He's larger than life in the Star Wars galaxy, so it didn't make sense to us to have him chasing this small-scale band of rebel



rousers. To me, they're beneath his notice.

Kanan might have been a Jedi, but he hasn't been acting much like a Jedi. He's lost his way a bit and they just haven't become important enough to get Vader to go all the way out to Lothal, where they are. I'm sure Vader has other concerns elsewhere. Most noticeably, for him: What happened to Obi-Wan Kenobi? Those kinds of things probably bother him more than some rebels he's never heard of!

It's been interesting, even though we haven't had Vader in the show, to sit down and ask ourselves, "Who is Vader in this time period?" And really, he is an unrepentant vessel of anger and hate. He is a full-on force of the dark side and there's no crack in his visage that would



be softened or weakened, so it would be very bad for our guys to meet him—because he would probably kill them very quickly. That's where the Inquisitor came in. So they have these subordinate-level Inquisitors out there helping to track down Jedi, kind of like a hunting dog.

He's a very well-educated, very intelligent villain. He gets called in if there's a problem, if there's a suspected Jedi. If he found Obi-Wan Kenobi, then he'd call Vader. It was a way to give us a villain who was still very evil and used the dark side, but wasn't nearly as powerful as Vader or the Emperor. It fits something from the Expanded Universe where there was the Inquisitor class in *Star Wars: The Old Republic*. I used the EU in the same way I always did on *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*. There are ideas in

"THE INQUISITOR IS A VERY WELL-EDUCATED, VERY INTELLIGENT VILLAIN. HE GETS CALLED IN IF THERE'S A PROBLEM."

there that make sense to me, so why not utilize them? A good idea is a good idea and then it becomes part of canon. That's how George Lucas and I always treated the EU when we worked on *The Clone Wars*.

Was he a hard character to find?

It's always tricky designing a villain. You fall into clichés so quickly. I always wonder where the villain shop these guys go to is... Did the Emperor know Anakin was going to be injured? He seemed surprised in *Revenge of the Sith*, yet he has this kind of dark samurai look waiting for Anakin in the hospital! He couldn't have been completely unknowledgeable of the situation, but then to think that he had some aesthetic in mind for Vader... Did Vader just happen to look that evil when they put his costume on? It makes perfect sense because we were kids when we first saw it, but is that your standard medical suit? Maybe the Emperor just had it painted black? Or, are there other guys out there with white ones and crosses painted on them?

You're always worried that Darth Maul is the quintessential devil with horns, sharp teeth—villains never seem interested in good dental hygiene! There are all these kind of clichéd things, but you want them to be scary. I feel that an attitude and an intellect can always make someone very scary. We had the Inquisitor as a Chagrian (like Mas Amedda) early on. We thought that made some kind of sense with the unique alien



Right: The fearsome Inquisitor commands the troops as he hunts down the Jedi.

Above: Agent Kallus inspects two Imperial stormtroopers.

Top right, opposite page: Commandant Arako and Tadmaster Wyles Grint on Lorthal.

design. I was interested in keeping the idea of an Inquisitor like it came from a prequel era alien rather than an original trilogy alien. We went back and forth with that and in hindsight, it's good that we didn't use him because his horns would be so tall it'd be hard getting him into a TIE fighter! There are all kinds of practical concerns we worry about. We tried several different heads. I believe it was Howard Roffman [executive vice president of franchise management] who actually suggested making the character an Utapaun. Our art director, Kilian Plunkett, and I really liked it.

I don't think Kilian and I realized how much we made the Inquisitor look like the character of the Son from the Clone Wars "Mortis" trilogy of episodes until much later. Once we realized, we thought it all made perfect sense, because that whole trilogy in the Clone Wars was about echoing things that were going to happen and had happened. In some ways yet another rippled manifestation of the future was to see an Inquisitor that's reminiscent of the Son...



Jason Isaacs is voicing the character on the show. Was he first on the list?

I wanted to put him into *The Clone Wars* for a long time, but I just didn't have the character that I thought was the right fit for him. It struck [fellow executive producers] Simon Kinberg, Greg Weisman, and I that this guy would make a great Inquisitor or maybe an Imperial officer of some kind. Jason had a calm coolness in his voice and he's very well schooled in what makes an excellent bad guy. When I directed him in the voice sessions, he would have a lot of input into what could make the Inquisitor more than just your average villain and what keeps him powerful. There's quietness to Jason's delivery, but it speaks specifically to being intellectual and analytical. This is definitely dangerous, because he's figuring things out about Kanan even when they're fighting just by the way Kanan looks and by the way he walks. It's a little bit like how you see Sherlock Holmes getting involved by observing everything around him. That makes a villain very dangerous.

"YOU NEVER REALLY SEE ADMIRAL PIETT OR ANY OF THOSE GUYS MIX IT UP... KALLUS CAN ACTUALLY GO OUT THERE AND FIGHT!"

Agent Kallus is the first Imperial to be a physical threat as well as a command officer. Was this a conscious choice?

I hadn't really thought of it that way, actually. You never really see Admiral Piett or any of those guys mix it up, so I guess that's true! Kallus can actually go out there and fight. We wanted to broaden a bit what's actually possible with Imperial officers. Aside from Kallus being a physical threat, we have Grint who's a rather large Imperial officer. He's kind of like a stormtrooper that got promoted and no longer is working out. He's much bigger and burlier than your average Imperial officer. I just wanted to increase the body types as much as possible. We're pretty limited in what we can do in CGI. Creating characters for one-off appearances is always tricky, but I think that they all serve their role to diversify the physical appearance of these Imperial officers as far as body type goes.

These characters aren't around when we get to *A New Hope*? Do you have an ending in mind for them? We always have to have an ending in mind, or at least a direction to where these characters are going. I think we all learnt in the *Clone Wars* that the most exciting characters were the ones where people had no idea what happened to them, like Ahsoka and Captain Rex.

Right: Agent Kallus leads the charge against the rebel insurgents!

Opposite page, from top: Commandant Aresko and Taskmaster Myles Grint diversify the look of the Imperial elite; Kallus in a moment of contemplation.





I think what it shows you is that people can get engaged by new characters and even though you notice that they're not in *A New Hope*, it's not like that's the only track of story going on in the galaxy at that time. Everything doesn't flow through that one point in time. It is a very important point, but it's not the only point. As we've shown with Ahsoka, it's conceivable that a lot of characters can be left or right of those points on the cinematic universe, on the map. It's a lot more wide open than people think. It's a pretty small universe if you think that these characters all meet each other at some point. I wonder if they even heard about each other, but I've been really surprised at how big the reaction has been for the characters we created for *Rebels*. There seems to be a hunger for new characters and locations in *Star Wars* and I think that's a good thing. It speaks to the health of the franchise and how each generation needs to own their own group of characters. Certainly there's the Han, Luke, and Leia generation and the Anakin, Obi-Wan and Padmé generation. There's also now the Anakin and Ahsoka generation and hopefully we're adding the Kanan, Ezra, and Hera generation to this band of galactic characters! 🌟

DAVE ON FAN REACTION TO *REBELS* AND THE SHOW'S VISUAL APPEAL

I was joking with this one family, who had dressed up as the crew of the *Ghost*, saying, "I really hope you enjoy this show. You've gone to all this effort." Obviously they like how the show looks which I think is already a great positive. I think that on *Clone Wars* we came up with a very edgy look, one that I don't think people were familiar with. As we went along, that style developed as the series developed. I think that we're all pretty satisfied here at the beginning of *Rebels* that our look is a lot more unified compared to *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*. Kilian Plunkett, as our art director, knows how to utilize the medium a lot better, and so do I for that matter.

And working from the very beginning with our artists like Joel Aron and Keith Kellogg definitely helps. Those guys came to work on the *Clone Wars* much later. It's all helped to create a look that people like and they're already responding. I've seen some concept stormtrooper helmets, and people are making Kanan armor. It's pretty overwhelming, especially because the *Clone Wars* came out and lots of people were saying, "What is this?" rather than "Hooray!"

I told my crew, I am enjoying it for them because they've worked so hard. I take a middle role where you can't get too low when people don't like things you're doing and you can't get too high when they like what you're doing. You've just got to keep staying true to your creative process and that's how I'm trying to guide the team through all this. But it's nice for sure!"

MORE TO SAY

Star Wars Rebels continues on Disney XD.

HAVE YOU?

MY STAR WARS

ACTOR **STEVE BLUM** AKA **ZEB ORRELIOS** TAKES TIME OUT FROM BEATING UP STORMTROOPERS IN *STAR WARS REBELS* TO DISCUSS WHAT THE SAGA MEANS TO HIM! INTERVIEW BY JONATHAN WILKINS

1 When did you first become aware of *Star Wars*?

Just before I graduated high school in May of 1977. I went to an opening night screening in Westwood, California.

2 What was your reaction to seeing *Star Wars* for the first time?

The sound and visuals of the first Imperial Star Destroyer rumbling across the screen were shocking, magnificent, and life-changing. I can't remember another movie moment where I was so utterly blown away.

3 Who is your favorite *Star Wars* character and why?

How do you choose? I probably related most to Han Solo, but I do love the goeyness of Jabba the Hutt and the pure fun of Chewbacca.

4 Do you have a favorite scene from a *Star Wars* film?

I loved it when Luke took out the Death Star; I cheered!



5 Can you reveal something about yourself that will surprise *Star Wars* fans?

That I'm normally a very quiet guy whose favorite activity is being outside with friends, loved ones or my animals. I'm not smart enough or knowledgeable enough to consider myself a geek, but have mad respect for those who are

and do. I miss a lot of references and I normally don't watch—or play—the things I've voiced. I promise, *Rebels* will be an exception!

6 Where is the strangest place you've been recognized?

Bathrooms are usually awkward. I think the weirdest place was in a hospital waiting room.

7 Where did you sign your first *Star Wars* autograph?

At home! The fan mail started coming in two days after I announced my role in *Rebels*!

8 Leia or Padmé?

Leia was a young crush for me. Yup! Love those buns.

9 Threepio or Artoo?

That's like choosing your favorite child! Fine. Artoo.

10 Darth Vader or Darth Maul?

Vader. Definitely Darth Vader!

2



3



3



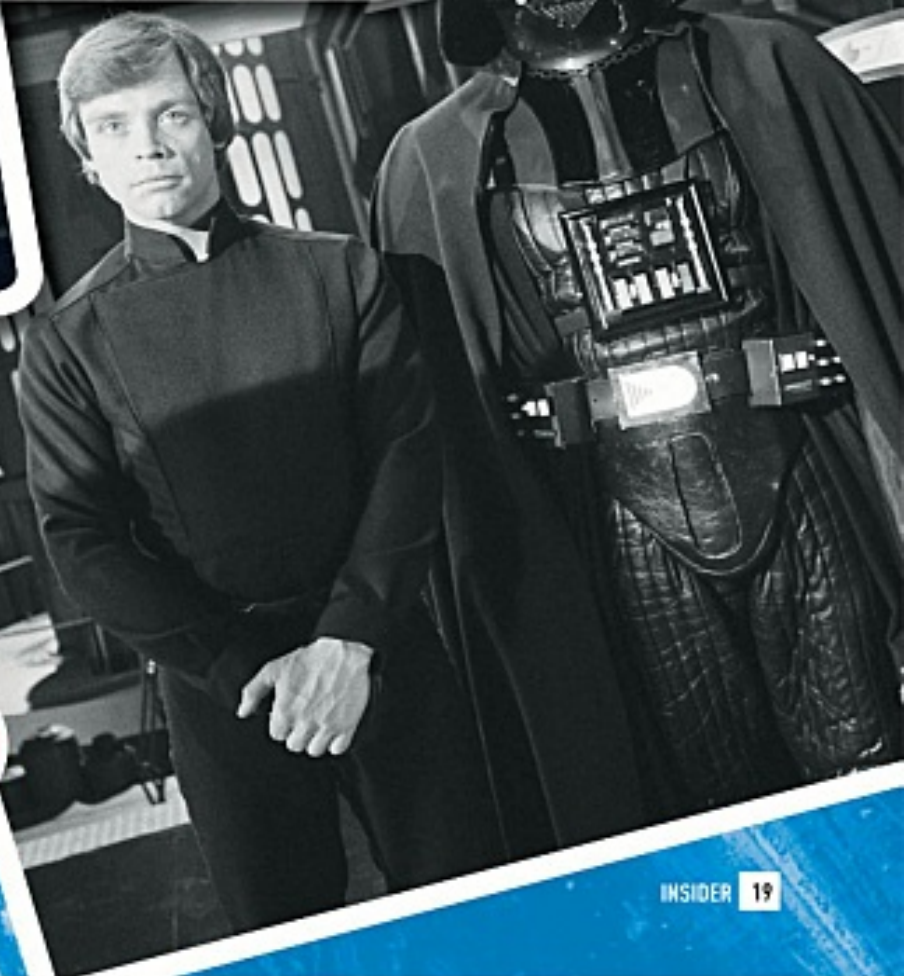
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STAR WARS REBELS CONCEPT ARTIST **AMY BETH CHRISTENSON** TELLS US ABOUT HER ROLE IN DEVELOPING THE LOOK OF THE NEW SERIES AND DESIGNING THOSE MEMORABLE IMPERIAL PROPAGANDA POSTERS. INTERVIEW BY AMY RATCLIFFE

THE ART



OF REBELS



Star Wars Insider: What are your day-to-day duties on *Star Wars Rebels*?

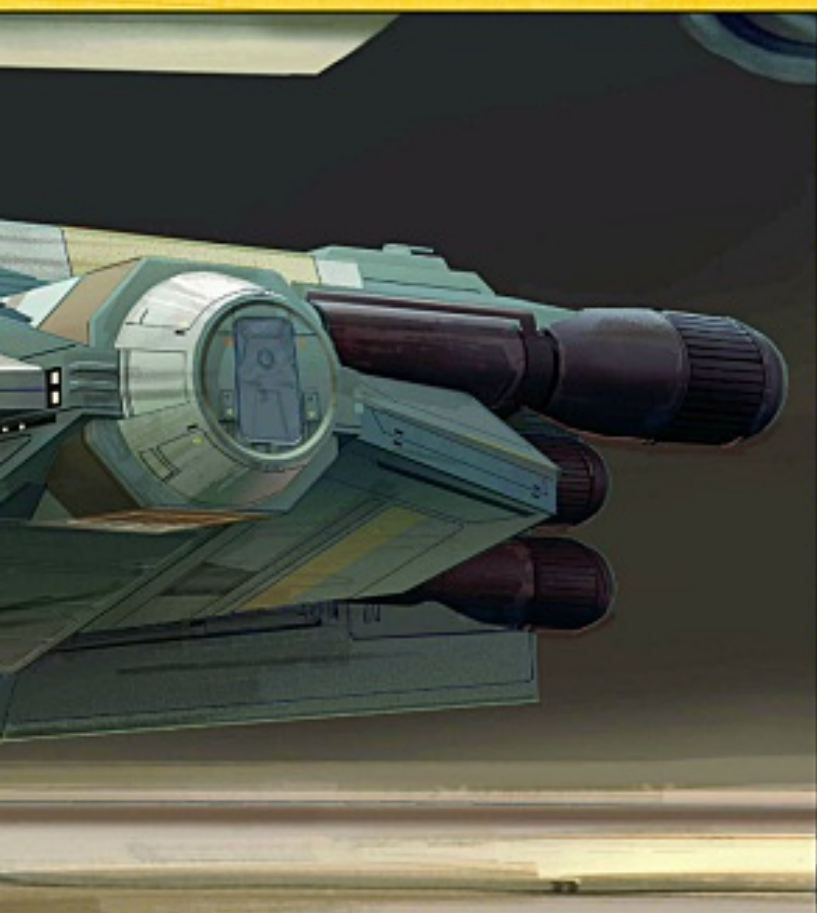
Amy Beth Christenson: I'm part of the concept art crew for *Rebels*. Our job is to draw and design everything, from characters and ships to sets and props. We do early sketches and studies to begin with, and then use line art and fully rendered paintings in order to help define the look of something. We also design everything from every angle so that our drawings can be easily translated into three-dimensional models for the show. For large environments in particular, we'll

"WE ARE INSPIRED BY THE EARLY ARTWORK OF THE ORIGINAL *STAR WARS* FILMS."

do paintings that help establish lighting and mood. On top of it all, *Rebels* has its own very distinct style, although we are also very much inspired by the early artwork of the original *Star Wars* films.

You created the beautiful propaganda posters for *Star Wars Rebels*. What kind of research did you do to combine that style with the *Star Wars* universe?

The decision to create propaganda-like posters had been made well before I was involved in the process, but it was open as far as what they looked like and what the message would be for each one. It was a bit of a jump from my usual style, so I studied a lot of historical posters and pulled from some of my favorite designs. At the early thumbnail stage, I ended up working simply, with big shapes and blocks of color, in order for them to read



Clockwise from top left: The *Ghost* in an image that echoes Ralph McQuarrie's illustration of the *Millennium Falcon*; two propaganda posters especially created to promote *Rebels*; the strange landscape of the planet Lothal; a settlement on Lothal; a study of Ezra's slingshot.



very quickly and easily. The final versions didn't get too much more detail than my first passes. This worked on multiple levels, since visually simple designs and color palettes were typical of historical propaganda posters anyway. On top of that, silhouetted shapes also wouldn't give away too much detail since some designs from the show had not yet been released. I added a little more color to the usual black, whites, and reds of the Empire in order to make the posters more eye-catching, but still tried to keep

them somber. The time period within the *Star Wars* universe was important in making the theme "recruitment." *Rebels* takes place in an era where the Empire is on the rise, yet no longer relies on clones. And adding elements that were very recognizably *Star Wars* into each one (stormtroopers, TIE fighter pilots, Star Destroyers, etc.), helped to immediately identify the universe and the time period. The posters were really fun to work on, both as an artist and a *Star Wars* fan.

As you've worked on the series, have any characters surprised you with their development?

Each character had a pretty well-defined attitude and role right from the beginning, even as we were helping with early visual development phases. That said, I was still completely blown away by what happened when they were brought to life. The writing, voice acting, and animation gave each character an incredible amount of personality, and it's been really fun watching all of the characters

Clockwise from left: Propaganda art; Ezra looks out on Lothal as the Imperials take flight; an enticing propaganda poster; the *Ghost*, as colored by Christensen; a crashed TIE fighter; two propaganda posters echoing Second World War imagery.



progress. For me, it feels like each character in *Rebels* is very settled into the *Star Wars* universe, and belongs there right from the get-go.

Have you been working on the *Ghost*? What's it like to develop such an important ship for the series?

The ship was entirely a group effort since it was such a huge and important undertaking. The ship exterior was designed early on by Kilian Plunkett and Dave Filoni—after that, I think just about everyone did a version of it in key production artwork. I just happened to be the last one to work on it, and the only real additions that I made were final color scheme and designing the *Phantom* [the *Ghost*'s attack shuttle]. Pat Presley and I also tag-teamed the interiors and I ended up designing the final cockpits. I think that while the *Ghost* is unique to anything in the *Star Wars* universe, it feels just enough like the *Falcon* that while it's "home" to the characters of the show, it will feel that way to the fans as well.

***Star Wars Rebels* is influenced by *A New Hope* and concept art from Ralph McQuarrie, so how do you balance those existing elements with telling a new story and creating new settings?**

We looked closely at the pre-production artwork of Ralph McQuarrie, but also that of Joe Johnston and Nilo Rodis-Jamero among others. For a lifelong fan that grew up with these guys as my heroes, it's both exciting and nerve-racking to create new designs that will fit into the same visual style. Since the new designs need to live in this particular *Star Wars* era, we tend to pay close attention to when and where the





"IT'S BOTH EXCITING AND NERVE-WRACKING TO CREATE NEW DESIGNS THAT WILL FIT IN THE SAME VISUAL STYLE."

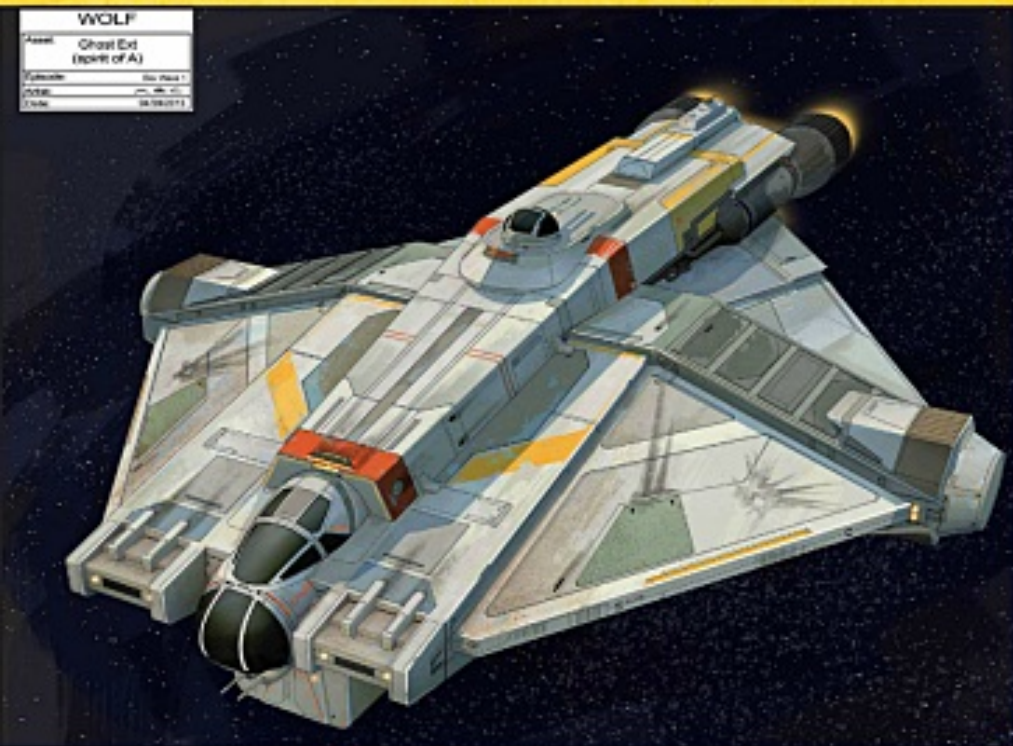
original designers used color, line, and detail. We also try to emulate their work through using pencil lines and brushes similar to what they used. *Rebels* has its own unique style though, apart from being inspired by the original art. All of it, old and new, has to be translated to fit into the same universe.

The overall palette of *Rebels* seems brighter than that of *The Clone Wars*. Can you speak to some of the decisions that were made at the beginning about how the series would look? I think that it was probably inspired by the paintings of Ralph McQuarrie. Early in the project, we were able to see his original production paintings in person, and they were even brighter and more vibrant than in photos/reproductions. It's something that we were very conscious of while working, even at the earliest stages. 🍷

MORE TO SAY

See more of Amy's art at www.artbyabc.com

HAVE YOU?



LOST IN ITALY



DARTH VADER'S ITALIAN VOICE ACTOR, MASSIMO FOSCHI, SHARES SOME MEMORIES OF BRINGING INTERGALACTIC MALEVOLENCE TO ROME... WORDS: CALUM WADDELL



Massimo Foschi: The voice of Darth Vader in Italy. Photo by Calum Waddell

Actor Massimo Foschi might be best known to fans of Italian cult cinema for his starring role in the gut-crunching classic *Last Cannibal World* (1977). Directed by Ruggero Deodato, who later made the more notorious *Cannibal Holocaust* (1980), the film was a surprise success and launched an entire genre of jungle-based meat-munching movies. However, Foschi is also a respected voice work veteran in his home country—with his most famous work being on the original *Star Wars* trilogy.

Beginning with *A New Hope* in 1977, Foschi was brought in to loop the menacing Darth Vader into Italian so that native-speaking audiences in areas such as Milan, Rome, and Venice could also enjoy the space fantasy epic...

"*Star Wars* totally changed my life," begins the actor, speaking exclusively to *Star Wars Insider*. "Even today, people around Rome recognize me. To the Italian audience, I was 'Darth Vader' in each of these three movies. I have children and adults come up to me on the street today and say, 'Please will you repeat my favorite lines?' The most common request is 'No, Luke... I am your father' from *The Empire Strikes Back*. Although I have also been asked to say 'May the Force be with you' which, of course, is not even a Darth Vader line!"



"Se solo tu conoscessi il potere del lato oscuro!"

"EVEN TODAY, PEOPLE AROUND ROME RECOGNIZE ME. TO THE ITALIAN AUDIENCE, I WAS DARTH VADER!"

A classically trained actor, Foschi is also something of a genre veteran. He dubbed for Lance Henriksen in *Aliens* (1986) and most recently added some continental mannerisms to Donald Sutherland in the *Hunger Games* series. He also returned to *Star Wars* in 2005 for the climactic prequel *Revenge of the Sith*, wherein he once again gave an Italian voice to Darth Vader.

"That was a lot of fun," he admits, before revealing that he felt no pressure about putting his own aural twist on the iconic villain. "Of course, Darth Vader was James Earl Jones, but that was fine for me. My job was to make the character distinct for local people—so although I was inspired by his talents, I felt as if I could still bring something a little different. He certainly has a great voice though!"

Indeed, for Foschi it is the ability to put his own interpretation onto an established English-language role that bagged him the *Star Wars* job. "I had been dubbing a number of big Hollywood actors before I got *Star Wars*," he adds. "I was already recognized in Italy for voicing such greats as Laurence Olivier, Kirk Douglas, Gregory Peck, Charles Dance and many other tremendous performers. That was how I got called in and asked if I might want to take on the challenge of dubbing James Earl Jones. Of course, I said 'yes.' I loved science fiction films and I could tell that this was going to be one of the best."

Asked about his final thoughts on his time verbalizing George Lucas's most celebrated antagonist, Foschi is quick to paraphrase a line from the famous space opera...

"All I can say to each and every person who continues to love and celebrate these films is 'May the Force remain strong with you,'" he laughs. "Such fan enthusiasm keeps this type of cinema alive for many generations to come." 🌌

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A USER'S GUIDE TO *STAR WARS* ON TWITTER

ENTER THE WORLD OF *STAR WARS* ON TWITTER! WORDS: AMY RATCLIFFE

One hundred and forty characters can convey a surprising amount of information. The character limit is at the heart of the social media service known as Twitter. Founded in March 2006, the website allows its users to send out tweets with words, photos, and links. It's a place to share short-form thoughts, to promote and market brands, to broadcast news, but perhaps most importantly, it's a place to connect with others across the world—including those in the *Star Wars* galaxy. Lucasfilm officially brought *Star Wars* to Twitter in February of 2009. From the company's account they share breaking stories about Episode VII and other upcoming projects, post behind-the-scenes photos from past *Star Wars* films, divulge the recipe for blue milk, and tweet back and forth with fans. The accessibility to such information and to other members of the *Star Wars* community can make fans feel like part of an extended digital family. It's a new way to interact with the franchise and those involved with it.



TWITTER 101: WHY TWEET?

It costs nothing to join Twitter, and signing up for the service and looking for other *Star Wars* fans can lead to a greater appreciation for the saga, captivating discussion, and entertaining speculation. Twitter can be used to get recommendations about which *Star Wars* novel or comic to read next, to see what rumors fans are discussing, to keep up with where the stars of the saga will be appearing, and to monitor the latest happenings. Spotting news on Twitter can be easier than hitting refresh on entertainment websites, and once reports hit the internet, Twitter is a natural place to discuss them and exchange opinions with fellow fans.

ETIQUETTE

Twitter has guidelines similar to most social media platforms and comment sections. Users shouldn't post spam or harass others. The site is about sharing and discussion; it is not a place to harangue or nag. Readers can follow actors, actresses, authors, and artists and respond to what they tweet, but don't bug them incessantly with questions about Episode VII or when their next *Star Wars* book will be released. If they open the door with a question-and-answer session, dive in—but remember Twitter isn't meant to be a platform for users to demand information

from others. As with anywhere on the Internet, please be kind and have a sense of humor. Don't join Twitter simply to criticize another user.

WHO'S OFFICIAL?

Caution should be exercised, because not everyone on Twitter is who they seem. Parody accounts exist, but the purpose of the account is typically noted in the user's profile. Others pretend to be someone else, such as a celebrity or author, or they simply squat on the user name. To minimize such actions, Twitter verifies users and applies a blue checkmark by the user name to

show the account is legit. They can do so by seeing if the person associated with the account has an official website that links to the Twitter page and by who else follows and interacts with the account.

WHO TO FOLLOW?

Many *Star Wars* personalities use Twitter. From talent to official accounts to authors, there's plenty to follow to keep your feed connected to the Force. Keep in mind these lists aren't exhaustive since people regularly leave and join Twitter. Hopefully there should be enough here to get you started. Happy tweeting!

OFFICIAL LUCASFILM ACCOUNTS

Star Wars - @StarWars
 Star Wars France - @StarWarsFR
 Star Wars Germany - @StarWarsDE
 Star Wars Italy - @StarWarsIT
 Star Wars Latin America - @StarWarsLATAM
 Star Wars United Kingdom - @StarWarsUK
 Indiana Jones - @IndianaJones
 Industrial Light & Magic - @ILMVF
 Lucasfilm Recruiting - @JoinTheForce
 Skywalker Sound - @SkySoundFL
 Willow - @WillowMovie

EPISODES IV-VI ACTORS

Anthony Daniels, C-3PO - @ADaniels3PO
 Billy Dee Williams, Lando Calrissian - @realbhw
 Carrie Fisher, Princess Leia Organa - @carriefisher
 David Prowse, Darth Vader - @isDARTHVADER
 Femi Taylor, Leia - @femi_taylor
 John Morton, Dak - @tappaf
 John Ratzenberger, Major Bren Derlin - @Dratzenberger
 Kenny Baker - @Actorkennybaker
 Mark Hamill, Luke Skywalker - @HamillHimself
 Peter Mayhew, Chewbacca - @TheWookieeRoars
 Simon J. Williamson, Max Rebo - @RealMaxRebo
 Warwick Davis, Wicket Warrick - @WarwickAdavis

EPISODES I-III ACTORS:

Ahmed Best, Jar Jar Binks - @ahmedbest
 Alan Ruscoe, Plo Koon, Daultay Daffine, and Bib Fortuna in Episode I - @theAlanRuscoe
 Bonnie Plesse, Beru Lars - @bonnieplesse
 Brian Blessed, voice of Boss Nass - @brianblessed
 Daniel Logan, Boba Fett - @Daniel_Logan
 Dominic West, palace guard - @DominicWest
 Ewan McGregor, Obi-Wan Kenobi - @mcgregor_ewan
 Hugh Quarshie, Captain Panaka - @HughQuarshie
 Jay Lagaia, Captain Typho - @JayLagaia
 Matthew Wood, voice of General Grievous - @matthewwood
 Orli Shoshan, Shaak Ti - @orlishoshan
 Peter Serafinowicz, voice of Darth Maul - @serafinowicz
 Samuel L. Jackson, Mace Windu - @SamuelLJackson
 Temuera Morrison, Jango Fett - @Tem_Morrison

STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS ACTORS

Adrienne Wilkinson, the Daughter - @Yo_AdrienneW
 Angelique Perrin, Adi Gallia - @AngeliquePerrin
 Anna Graves, Sabine Wren - @gravyvoice
 Ashley Eckstein, Ahsoka Tano - @HerUniverse
 Catherine Taber, Padmé Amidala - @cattabab
 Clare Grant, Latts Razzi - @ClareGrant
 Dave Fennoy, Pong Krell - @DaveFennoy
 Dee Bradley Baker, the clone troopers - @deebadleybaker
 Jaime King, Auroa Sing - @Jaime_King
 James Arnold Taylor, Obi-Wan Kenobi - @JATactor
 Jason Spisak, Lux Bonteri - @jason_spisak
 Jennifer Hale, Aayla Secura - @jhal tweets
 Jim Cummings, Hondo Ohnaka - @Jimcummingscome
 Jon Favreau, Pro Vizsla - @Jon_Favreau
 Katee Sackhoff, Bo Katan - @kateesackhoff
 Kevin M. Richardson, Jabba the Hutt - @ClevelandJr
 Matt Lanter, Anakin Skywalker - @MattLanter
 Meredith Salenger, Barriss Offee - @MeredithSalenger
 Nika Futterman, Asajj Ventress - @nfutterman
 Olivia d'Abo, Luminara Unduli - @OliviaDabo
 Olivia Hack, Katoni - @GoodOliviaHack
 Phil LaMarr, Kix Fisto - @phillamarr
 Robin Atkin Downes, Rush Clovis - @Robin_A_Downes
 Sam Witwer, Darth Maul - @SamWitwer
 Seth Green, Tado 360 - @SethGreen
 Simon Pegg, Dengar - @simonpegg
 Stephen Stanton, Admiral Tarkin - @Stephen_Stanton
 Tasia Valenza, Shaak Ti - @TasiaValenza
 TC Carson, Mace Windu - @TCCarson



John Boyega bumps into Samuel L. Jackson!
 @JBoyega



Vanessa Marshall models a Star Wars
 Insider subscriber's shirt!
 @vanmarshall



Darth Vader supports the LA Dodgers!
 @StarWars



James Arnold Taylor
 presents Tiya Sircar.
 @JATactor



Peter Mayhew meets
 Ahmed Best.
 @TheWookieeRoars



Extreme Chewie!
 @VANS_66

STAR WARS REBELS

Freddie Prinze Jr., Kanan Jarrus - @RealFPJr
 Jason Isaacs, The Inquisitor - @jasonisally
 Steve Blum, Zeb Orrelios - @blumspew
 Taylor Gray, Ezra Bridger - @Taylor_Gray_
 Tiya Sircar, Sabine Wren - @tiyasircar
 Vanessa Marshall, Hera Syndulla - @vanmarshall

EPISODE VII ACTORS

Andy Serkis - @andyserkis
 Daisy Ridley - @ridley_daisy
 Gwendoline Christie - @lovegwendoline
 John Boyega - @JBoyega
 Lupita Nyong'o - @Lupita_Nyong'o

STAR WARS AUTHORS

Barbara Hambly - @BarbaraHambly
 Brian Wood - @brianwood
 Christie Golden - @ChristieGolden
 Corinna Bechko - @CorinnaBechko
 Dan Wallace - @danwall88
 Drew Kargyshyn - @DrewKargyshyn
 Elaine Cunningham - @e_cunningham
 Greg Bear - @greg_bear
 Haden Blackman - @HadenBlackman
 Helen Keier - @HelenKeier
 Jason Fry - @jasoncry
 James Kahn - @ThatJamesKahn
 Jeremy Barlow - @Jeremy_Barlow
 John Jackson Miller - @jjmfaraway
 John Ostrander - @jostander
 Judd Winick - @JuddWinick
 Jude Watson - @judewatson1
 J. W. Rinzler - @jwinzler
 Karen Traviss - @karentraviss
 Kevin Hearne - @KevinHearne
 Kevin J. Anderson - @TheKJA
 Kevin Rubio - @TheKevinRubio
 K. W. Jeter - @kwjeter
 Martha Wells - @marthawells1
 Matthew Stover - @MWStover
 Michael A. Stackpole - @MikeStackpole
 Paul S. Kemp - @Paulskemp
 Randy Stradley - @Randy_Stradley
 R.A. Salvatore - @r_a_salvatore
 Ron Marz - @ronmarz
 Ryder Windham - @ryderwindham
 Sean Williams - @adelaidesean
 Tim Lebbon - @timlebbon
 Vonda N. McIntyre - @vondanmcintyre

The greatest Star Wars
 photo of all time
 @AsterKennyBaker



Dave Filoni shows off a
 Mandalorian helmet
 @Dave_Filoni

STAR WARS ARTISTS

Amy Beth Christensen - @abchristensen
 Ben Curtis Jones - @BenCurtisJones
 Brian Rod - @brodore
 Cat Staggs - @CatStaggs
 Dave Dorman - @DoveDorman
 Gabriel Hardman - @gabrielhardman
 Grant Gould - @grantgoboom
 Hugh Fleming - @StuggyMF
 Jan Duersema - @JanDuersema_art
 Jason Palmer - @jasonpal_art
 Jeff Carlisle - @JeffCarlisleArt
 Joe Corroney - @Joe_Corroney
 Justin Chung - @JustinChungArt
 Katie Cook - @katiecandraw
 Matt Busch - @Matt_Busch
 Randy Martinez - @Randy_Martinez
 Spencer Brinkerhoff - @spencerB3
 Terese Nielsen - @tnielsenart
 Tsuneo Sando - @bokusanda



FAN SITES

501st Legion - @501stLegion
 Mandalorian Mercs - @mandomercs
 Rebelscum.com - @rebelscumnews
 TheForce.Net - @theforce.net
 The Rebel Legion - @rebellegion
 Club Jade - @clubjade
 Jedi News - @JediNewsUK

The Del Rey Star Wars books team pay tribute to the late Aaron Allston at San Diego Comic Con International
 @DelReyStarWars

TOP TWEETS

"Fun fact: there were more practical models created for each prequel movie than for the entire original trilogy."
 —@starwars, June 11, 2014

"For those wondering, turns out you can melt a stick of RAM if you throw an appropriately complex simulation at it."
 —@ILMVFX, May 31, 2014

"It's official...there IS underwear in space."
 —@carrieffisher, June 7, 2014

"May the 4th be with you! Best poney holiday besides April Fools. Thanks for all the support for my return in Ep. 7—Hope I don't get typecast."
 —@HamillHimself, May 4, 2014

"About to photobomb some stormtroopers #sww2014"
 —@JATActor, May 31, 2014

"Thank you for all the wonderful good wishes about Star Wars!!!! I am so excited and so very grateful!! A real dream come true! #overthemoon"
 —@lovegwendoline, June 5, 2014

"The power of great character names. Helps us connect with them. #Skywalker #Yoda #Anakin #Solo"
 —@JBoyega, June 16, 2014

"Boba Fett! RT @isDARTHVADER: If you could be any Star Wars character (other than Darth Vader), who would you be?"
 —@Daniel_Logan, June 10, 2014

"Guess what I'm doing today ? ;
 swtor #swtor #starwars #vette #itainteasybeingblue"
 —@cattaber, June 2, 2014

"This Day in Star Wars History 6/20/76 - The Los Angeles Times publishes the first photograph from the Star Wars set."
 —@501stLegion

"I still can't stop thinking about who was by President Obama's side tonight: Samuel L. Jackson. Jedi Mace Windu! The Force IS strong in him!"
 —@vanmarshall, May 8, 2014



John Jackson Miller harnesses his inner Jedi
 @jmrarway



Chopper and starwars.com's Matt Martin enjoy the view! @mtholoword

OFFICIAL HASHTAGS

Why use hashtags? Adding a hashtag to tweets and other postings across social media makes it easier to engage with other fans. Searching by hashtags is a way to learn about official announcements and to find out about events around the world. For occasions such as Star Wars Celebrations and Star Wars Weekends, including hashtags and keeping tabs on them can give fans that aren't there a way to live vicariously through attendees.

For the latest list of official Star Wars hashtags, visit starwars.com/hashtags

OFFICIAL HASHTAGS FROM LUCASFILM

General Star Wars tweets - #StarWars
 Star Wars: The Clone Wars tweets - #CloneWars
 Star Wars Rebels tweets - #StarWarsRebels
 Star Wars Celebration tweets - #StarWarsCelebration
 Star Wars: Episode VII tweets - #StarWarsVII
 Star Wars Weekends at Disney's Hollywood Studios tweets - #StarWarsWeekends
 May the 4th tweets - #StarWarsDay or #MayThe4thBeWithYou

MORE TO SAY

Don't forget to follow Star Wars Insider at on Twitter at @SW_Insider.

HAVE YOU?

SELECTED LICENSEES

Abrams - @ABRAMSbooks
 Chronicle Books - @ChronicleBooks
 Del Rey Star Wars Books - @DelReyStarWars
 DK Publishing - @dkpublishing
 Gentle Giant Ltd - @gentlegiantltd
 Hasbro - @HasbroNews
 Quirk Books - @quirkbooks
 Sideshow Collectibles - @collectsideshow
 Star Wars Celebration - @SW_Celebration



Warwick Davis on set!
 @WarwickDavis



STAR WARS COSTUME STYLING

**COSTUMES
FOR A GALAXY
FAR, FAR AWAY**

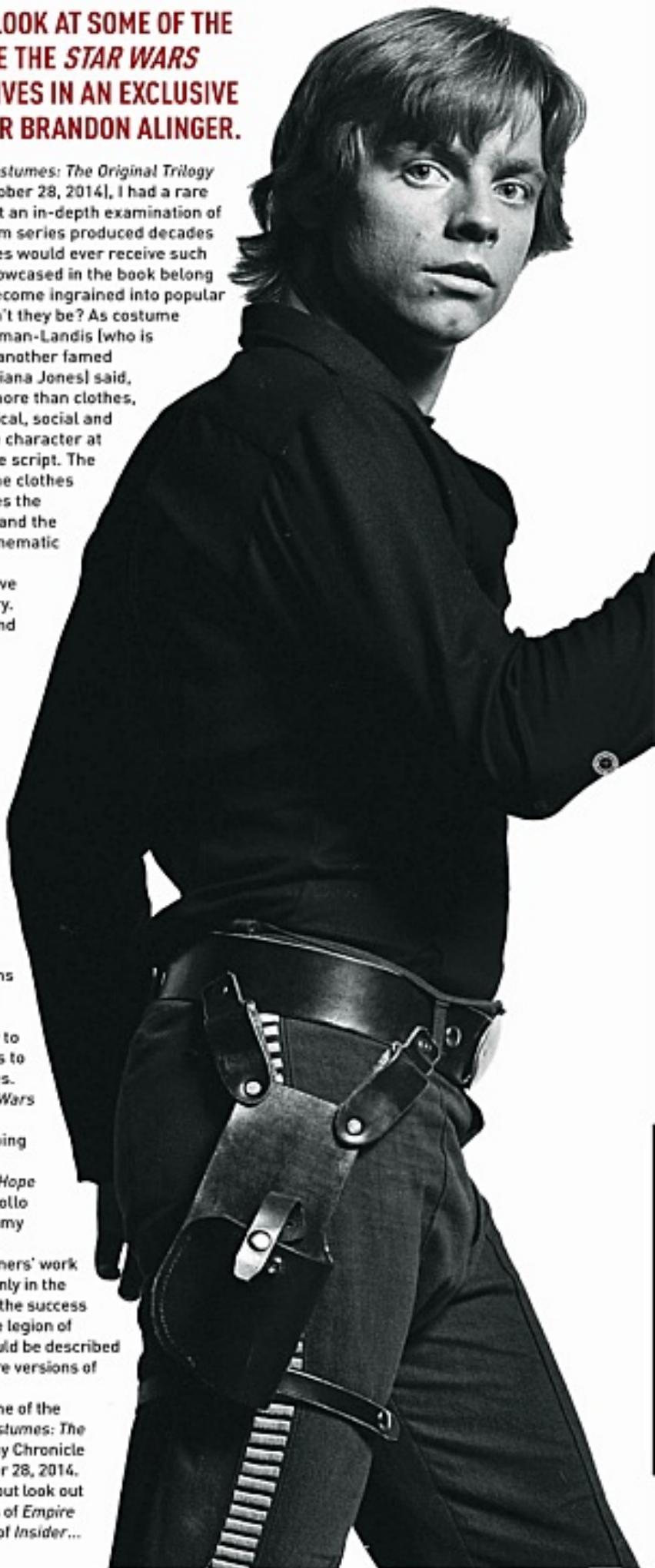
INSIDER TAKES A LOOK AT SOME OF THE TREASURES INSIDE THE *STAR WARS* WARDROBE ARCHIVES IN AN EXCLUSIVE REPORT BY AUTHOR BRANDON ALINGER.

In writing *Star Wars Costumes: The Original Trilogy* (Chronicle Books, October 28, 2014), I had a rare opportunity to conduct an in-depth examination of a specific facet of a film series produced decades ago. What other movies would ever receive such treatment? The outfits showcased in the book belong to characters who have become ingrained into popular culture—and why shouldn't they be? As costume designer Deborah Nadoolman-Landis (who is responsible for outfitting another famed Lucasfilm adventurer, Indiana Jones) said, "Costumes are so much more than clothes, embodying the psychological, social and emotional condition of the character at a particular moment in the script. The costume designer gives the clothes to the actor, the actor gives the character to the director, and the director tells the story. Cinematic icons are born when the audience falls deeply in love with the people in the story. And that's what movies, and costume design, are all about."

The original trilogy's costumes warranted a book of their own, as their creation tale is enormously complex. Just as *Star Wars* was no ordinary film series, the saga's costumes are not your typical ensembles. Over the course of the trilogy, three costume designers—John Mollo, Aggie Rodgers, and Nilo Rodis-Jamero—and dozens of technicians, wardrobe personnel, and outside vendors worked diligently to bring authentic characters to life through their costumes. "The costumes from *Star Wars* are really not so much costumes as bits of plumbing and general automobile engineering," said *A New Hope* costume designer John Mollo while accepting the Academy Award for the film.

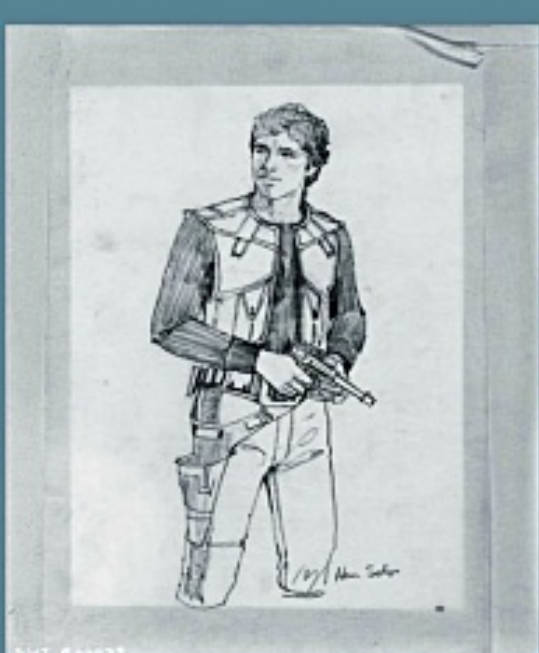
The results of the designers' work speak for themselves not only in the success of the films, but in the success of their merchandising. The legion of *Star Wars* action figures could be described as little more than miniature versions of the costumes.

Here is a preview of some of the stories told in *Star Wars Costumes: The Original Trilogy*, published by Chronicle Books and released October 28, 2014. We start with *A New Hope*, but look out for details on the costumes of *Empire* and *Jedi* in the next issues of *Insider*...





For the film's final ceremony, Lucas wanted Luke to be dressed more like Han Solo. As such, he was given a pair of trousers with the distinctive segmented tuxedo stripe. The brown-and-yellow trousers, identical to Solo's in *Empire* and *Jedi*, were identified by the archivists at Skywalker Ranch while researching for the costume book. The giveaway is the 28" waist size, 4" smaller than Ford's trousers.



Like much of the film's design, the earliest renditions of *A New Hope's* costumes were created by Ralph McQuarrie. McQuarrie looked at westerns as one of his influences, as evidenced by the gunslinger belts. These sketches bear handwritten titles by George Lucas.





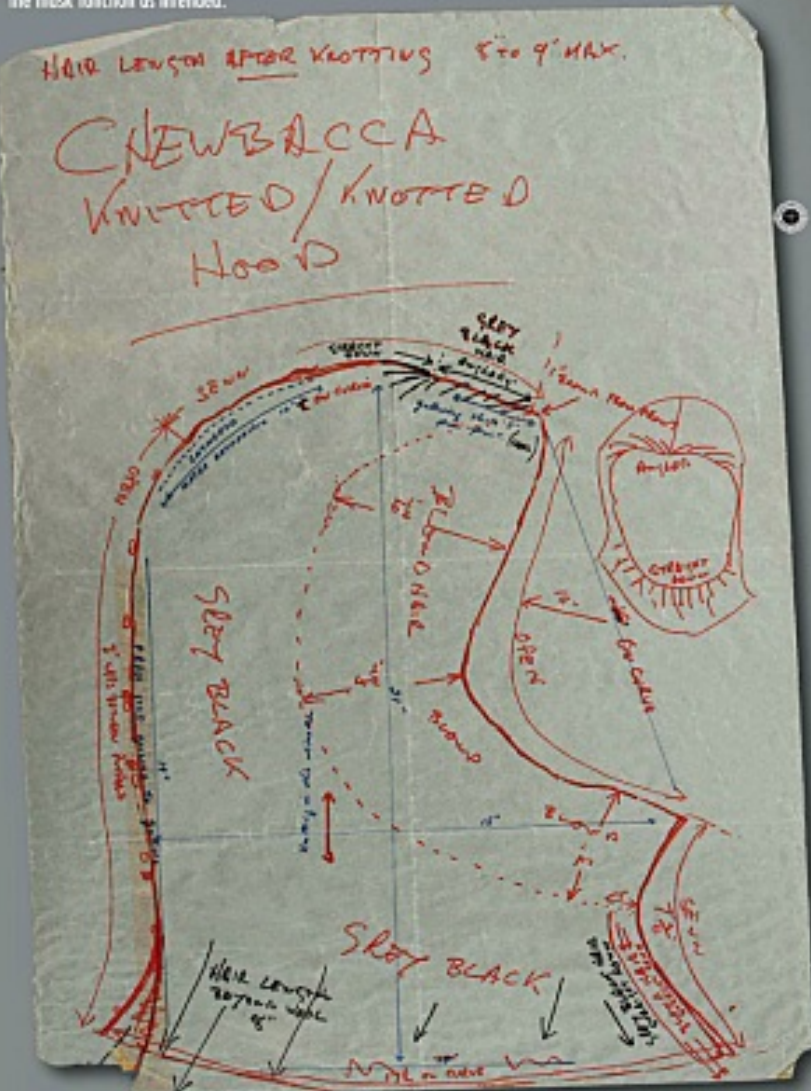
Working on a limited budget, Mollo assembled many costumes from stock garment pieces found at Bermans and Nathans, the leading costume house in London at the time. With more than a million costume pieces in stock, Bermans had the variety that Mollo needed to assemble garb for a galaxy far, far away. Some of the pieces in their stock had been in use as theatrical rental pieces since the late 18th century. One of Bermans and Nathans' original window signs today hangs on the wall at Angels the Costumiers, who acquired Bermans and Nathans in 1992.



John Mollo was an ideal choice to design costumes for *A New Hope* as he had an extensive background in military uniforms. "George said to me, 'You've got a very difficult job here. I don't want anyone to notice the costumes,'" Mollo recalled. In this early Mollo sketch for rebel aides and field commanders, the designer's usage of military-like insignia is apparent. The insignia, including the well-known rebel and Imperial emblems, became a staple of many *Star Wars* uniforms.

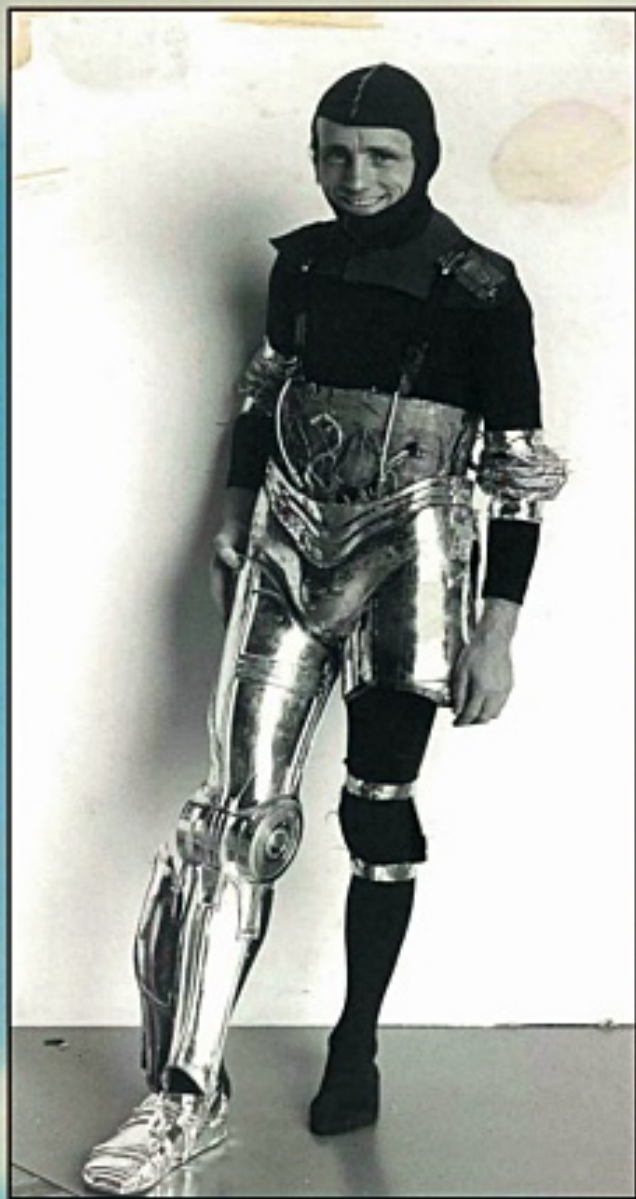


A New Hope could not have been produced without a major collaborative effort from the various departments. For Chewbacca, a body suit was knitted under the supervision of the costume department from Angora wool, and knotted with hand-tied yak hair. The Wookiee mask was created by veteran industry make-up artist Stuart Freeborn, who had built a similar mask for the apes in 2001: *A Space Odyssey*. The moustache-like cuts seen here in the Wookiee's upper lip helped the snarl mechanism of the mask function as intended.

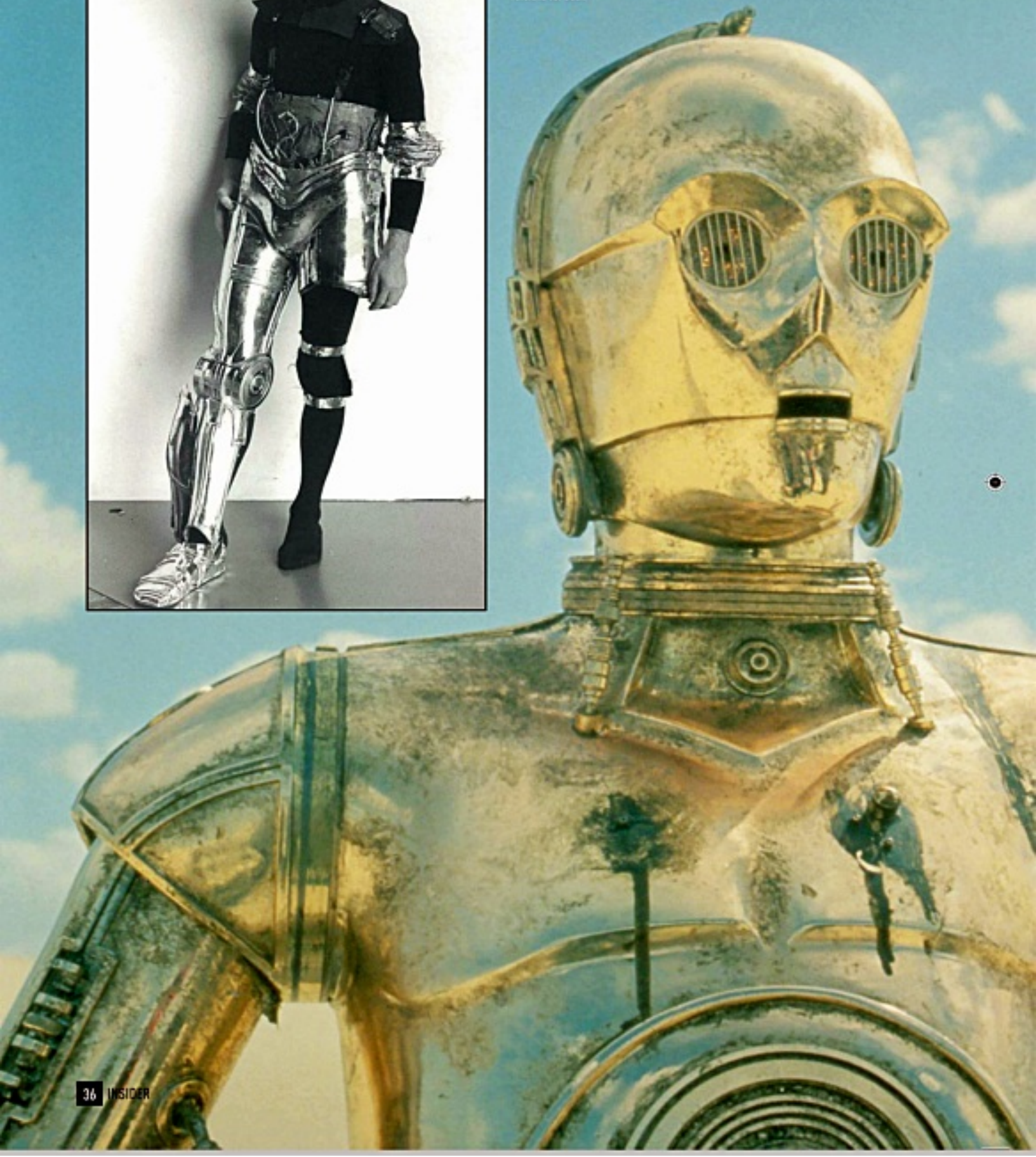


Chewbacca's mask featured an integral hood, knitted and knotted in the same fashion as the body suit. Here is Stuart Freeborn's original pattern for the hood.





C-3PO's golden shell may have been the most complex costume created for any *Star Wars* film. "It was first offered to the costume department, but they said 'That's far too industrial.' So it was handed off to the prop department," says prop man Brian Lufthouse, who dressed Anthony Daniels in the costume. The suit went on in many components and required a lot of engineering work to function correctly. These images, featuring prop man Jim Marlow in the suit, show how it went together. Note the wires crudely taped on where the openings in the joints could potentially show — these were upgraded to stitched fabric versions for *Jedi*.

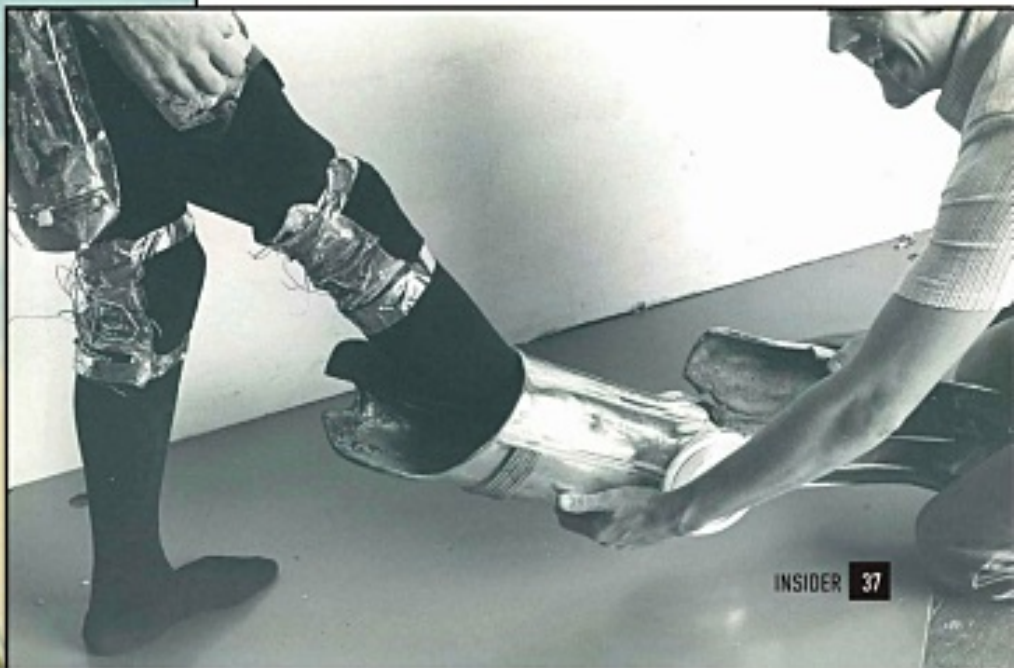


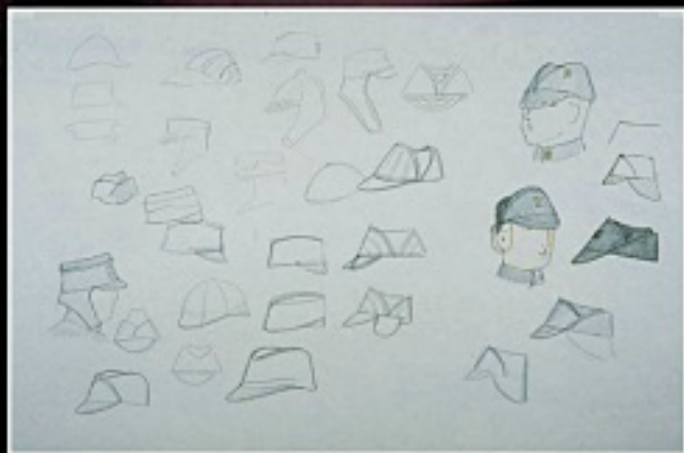


Wardrobe assistant Colin Wilson dressed many actors on the set of *A New Hope*. He is seen here preparing a rebel pilot for battle. "Most of the costumes were quite easy to look after," says Wilson. "It was only the stormtroopers that proved a bit of a headache."



Final assembly of the C-3PO costume was completed on location the night before cameras rolled. Here a painter prepares to dress the costume with wax and grime to prevent it from reflecting an on-set "chippie" (carpenter) or "spark" (electrician) into the camera.





Malla experimented with a wide variety of styles for the Imperial Officers' cap. The "Imperial disc" that adorns the cap in the final film is actually a pulley from an LP turntable manufactured in Borehamwood, not far from Elstree Studios where the original trilogy was shot.



Stormtrooper costumes were manufactured by "vacuum-forming" sheet plastic. The vacuum-forming process involves heating a piece of plastic, and then using suction to form it over a pattern. The Stormtrooper costumes were notoriously difficult to wear, let alone sit down in.



The Darth Vader costume used in *A New Hope* was sent to Don Post Studios for a brief time after production, to serve as reference for the Vader Halloween masks they were producing. This image was taken outside of Don Post Studios, and offers a rare close-up of the helmet.



"George wanted the Imperials to look very efficient, and totalitarian, and Fascist," said Nello. The designer's original plan for the Imperial Officers was to repurpose tanks from the film *The Blue Max*, as pictured here. "We played with the idea of taking all the buttons off, but Berman decided that they didn't want their uniforms messed about in that way," said Nello.



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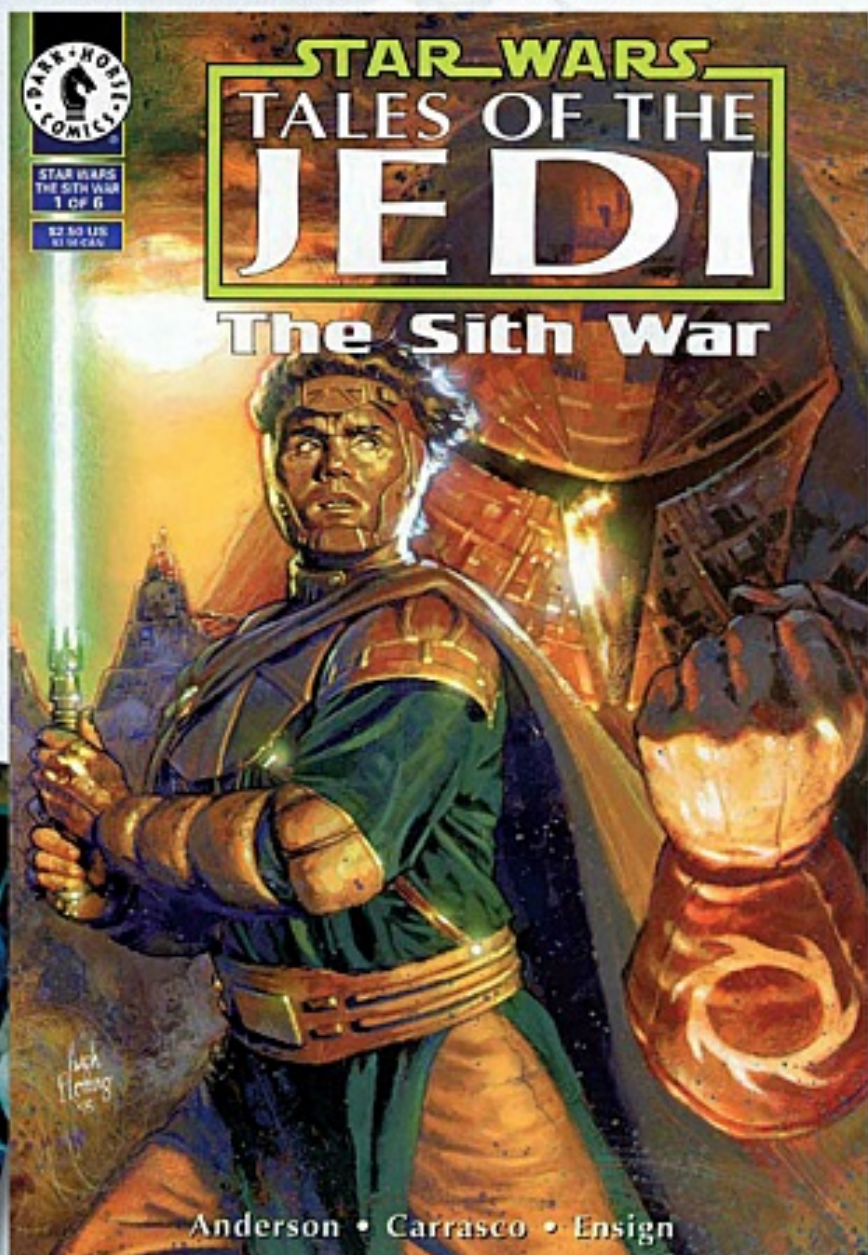
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AUTHORS OF THE EXPANDED UNIVERSE: TALES OF THE SITH

BY MICHAEL KOGGE

IN THE FINAL PART OF OUR SERIES (SEE *INSIDER* #150 AND #151), WE TAKE A LOOK BACK ON THE FINAL ISSUES OF TALES OF THE JEDI, AS THE SITH TOOK CENTER STAGE!





Left: The Sith attack of Coruscant in *Fall of the Sith Empire*, as drawn by Dario Corresco, Jr.

Below: Tales of the Jedi: *Dark Lords of the Sith* #6

Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Corresco's original character sketch for the legendary Sith lord, Naga Sadow; *Tales of the Jedi: The Sith War* #1; the *Star Wars* gang, circa 1994, left to right: writers Rebecca Moesta and Kevin J. Anderson, artists Chris Gasset and Dario Corresco, Jr., and Dark Horse editor Bob Cooper.

"My Lord, it's impossible to locate the ship. It's out of our range."

"Not for a Sith."

As hard as it might be to believe, this exchange between Nute Gunray and Darth Sidious in *The Phantom Menace* marked the first time the word "Sith" was spoken in a *Star Wars* film. Yet in the twenty-two years before Episode I's release in 1999, even casual film fans had learned that the Jedi's legendary enemies were called the Sith. It's a testament to the power of *Star Wars*' spin-off merchandise such as books, games, and comics that few were surprised when Sidious revealed the name of the Jedi nemeses on-screen two decades later.

In fact, the Sith had been part of the *Star Wars* mythology since its inception. While writing the early drafts of the screenplay, George Lucas found inspiration in many science fiction authors, among them Edgar Rice Burroughs, who used "Sith" in his 1913 serialized novel *Warlord of Mars* as a name for giant alien hornets. Lucas played around with the word, first calling his villains the "Black Knights of Sith" before settling on "Dark Lord of the Sith" to identify Darth Vader in his second draft:

The awesome, seven-foot-tall
BLACK KNIGHT OF THE SITH
makes his way into the
blinding light of the cockpit
area. This is LORD DARTH
VADER, right hand to the
MASTER OF THE SITH.

True to their secretive nature, the Sith didn't need to be acknowledged in movie dialogue to trickle down from Lucas's screenplay into the variety of ancillary merchandise, like the Marvel Comics adaptation and the Del Rey novelization. Over the years, just as fans clamored to know more about the Jedi Knights, they wondered the same about these mysterious Sith. Some even went to the lengths of producing their own stories, such as Nicole Courtney's radio play *The Dark Lords of the Sith*, which won the grand prize for *Bantha Tracks*' 1983 Creativity Contest.



In the early 1990s, when Dark Horse Comics acquired the *Star Wars* license, Lucasfilm permitted more about the Jedi and Sith of yore to be divulged. Writer Tom Veitch, fresh off his success with the *Dark Empire* comic, set his new series, *Tales of the Jedi*, four thousand years before *A New Hope*. In this era, Veitch established that the Jedi Knights of the Old Republic believed they had wiped out all the Sith, yet

remnants of Sith alchemy lay in museums and the evil spirit of the Sith Lord Freedon Nadd haunted the tombs of the planet Onderon. Veitch's approach unveiled bits and pieces about the Sith issue by issue, giving the Jedi a strong antagonist, yet allowing most of the Sith history to remain mysterious.

DARK LORD OR DARK LORDS?

The original *Tales of the Jedi* five-issue series and two-parter, *The Freedon Nadd Uprising*, sold so well that Veitch was able to explore more about the Jedi's war against the Sith darksiders. For the next installment set in the *Tales* era, he teamed up with *Star Wars* novelist Kevin J. Anderson. "I got to know Tom Veitch because I started reading the *Dark Empire* books and I wanted to include those events in my *Jedi Academy* trilogy," Anderson says. "I had the spirit of a long dead Dark Lord of the Sith who happened to live thousands of years before the films. The light bulb went on over both of our heads at the same time and we said, 'Well, what if your Dark Lord of the Sith guy happened to be living at the same time as my Jedi guys were?' We decided to pool our skills and ended up telling that full-blown story of the Dark Lords of the Sith and the Sith War, which was the whole origin story of Exar Kun and Ulic Qel-Droma."

Together, Veitch and Anderson made their bold proposal to tell these "tales of the Sith." Lucasfilm was understandably hesitant. At this time, the first prequel film was only in its initial stages and no one knew what, if anything, George Lucas might do with the Sith. He had not yet established the "Rule of Two," the idea there could be only one Sith Lord and one apprentice at a time. "They said, 'George will never go for this,'" Veitch recalls. "Fortunately for all of us, he loved the idea."

GOSSETT DESIGNED WHAT WOULD BECOME AN ICONIC WEAPON IN THE PREQUEL TRILOGY.



TWIN BLADES

Upon Lucasfilm's approval, Veitch traveled to Anderson's house in Colorado and hammered out ideas during sessions that lasted five or six hours. Their collaboration resulted in the best-selling series *Dark Lords of the Sith*, with the first five issues penciled by Chris Gossett and the last by Art Wetherell.

During the concept stage, Gossett designed what would become an iconic weapon in the prequel trilogy: the double-bladed lightsaber. Gossett had started messing around with lightsabers in the original *Tales of the Jedi* series. "The ancient Jedi would not have all made flashlight length handles for their weapons. They would have experimented," he says. "I proposed that lightsabers in the Old Republic look more handcrafted, like weapons from feudal Japan." A prime example of this was the lightsaber Gossett supplied Twi'lek Jedi Tott Doneeta. Its curved hilt resembled a Japanese katana.

However, it would be the double-bladed lightsaber Gossett envisioned for dark Jedi Exar Kun that would capture fans' imaginations. Though Kun did not use it until *The Sith War*, which was drawn by Dario Carrasco, it was Gossett who conceived of this ideal Sith weapon. Such a unique design caused nervousness at Lucasfilm, as it truly pushed what was seen in the films. But after some creative back-and-forth with *Dark Horse* editor Dan Thorsland, they approved Gossett's design. Five years later, Gossett was overjoyed to see Darth Maul wield the dual blades in *The Phantom Menace*.

NEW TEAM, NEW TALES

Dark Lords was a resounding success, and Dark Horse immediately commissioned a sequel series, *The Sith War*. Veitch and Anderson co-plotted the first two issues, then Anderson took the reins while Veitch stepped away. Those two issues would be Veitch's final contribution to the *Star Wars* universe after many years of stories.

A new artist also entered the fold. Thirty-three year-old Dario Carrasco, Jr., had received his degree in architecture from the Technological University of the Philippines in Manila and spent a few years as a draftsman in Saudi Arabia. But his dream since elementary school in the Philippines was to become a comic book artist. He immigrated to Canada to pursue his passion and, as soon as he landed in Vancouver, he sent samples out to Marvel Comics. It wasn't until he met the editors at the San Diego Comic-Con that his samples were passed along, and he landed his first assignment to pencil *Alpha Flight* from issue #125. He continued to work on Marvel titles, penciling the Pinhead mini-series in the Epic line, until the company went bankrupt in 1994.

This sad turn of events had a happy ending that led Carrasco into the galaxy far, far away. "On one particular Sunday, I was a guest in a local convention in Vancouver," Carrasco remembers. "I met an old acquaintance and a special guest, Diana Schutz, who was also the editor-in-chief at Dark Horse at the time. When she saw me, she asked if I was doing any work and I mentioned to her about the lay-off at Marvel. She asked for some samples that she could bring back to Dark Horse with her. The following week she put me in contact with [editor] Bob Cooper who asked me to do a one-page sample. The rest is history."

Drawing *Star Wars* professionally was a dream come true. Carrasco had been a fan of the saga as a teenager growing up in the Philippines. "I saw the first sequel [*The Empire Strikes Back*] when I was in high school. It got imprinted in my mind so much that when I stepped into university, I sketched my own sci-fi universe in my notebook, complete with ships, creatures, and main characters. One of my classmates and a very good fan of my work and a friend, asked me to give him the notebook. I signed it and I gave it to him."



Opposite page, from top: Design sketches by Carrasco for Aarba the Hutt, Jori Pothfinder (later Dargoon) in the *Golden Age of the Sith*, the first double-bladed lightsaber, as wielded by the Dark Jedi Exar Kun. Chris Gossett originated this idea in an unused concept sketch for *Dark Lords* of the *Sith*, which Dario Carrasco later drew upon for his depiction of Exar Kun in the pages of *The Sith War*.

This page, clockwise from top: Exar Kun reveals his double-bladed lightsaber in a panel from *The Sith War* pencilled by Dario Carrasco, Jr.; one of Gossett's unique handgrip designs for the ancient Jedi; Gossett's 1993 concept sketch for Master Goll Bear; a 2012 sketch of Mandalore by Dario Carrasco.



TALES OF THE TALES

When Carrasco met the tight deadline and finished off *The Sith War*, Bob Cooper asked him to draw the next two *Tales* series, which would also be scripted by Kevin J. Anderson. Instead of being a sequel, they would be prequels, set a thousand years in the past, with the evocative titles: *Golden Age of the Sith* and *Fall of the Sith Empire*. On these series, Carrasco didn't have to emulate Gossett's style. He could flex his own creative muscle designing new characters, spaceships, and aliens.

"I'm a history buff myself and the early history of *Star Wars* was my cup of tea," Carrasco says. "Both of my ideas of design for *Golden Age* and *Fall* were taken from the influences of feudal Japan mixed with Mesopotamian and Egyptian backgrounds."

Lucasfilm's only restriction was that Carrasco and Anderson make no direct copy of a human historical setting, because *Star Wars* was a separate universe unto itself. "If an influence taken from our history could be improved upon, as long as the design was alien in structure, it was good with Lucasfilm," Carrasco says.

Carrasco also put his architectural experience to good use throughout the series, particularly in one essential *Star Wars* moment. "I have a lot of favorite scenes, but my most memorable was the epic battle in the city of Coruscant in *Fall*. The wide spreads were very intricate and detailed. I had such fun doing them. It's like I'm looking into the lens of that unforgettable event in *Tales of the Jedi*. If I had to do *Tales* again, I wouldn't do it any other way. I was so proud of the work I put in these series."



THE FINAL TALE OF A JEDI

After *Golden Age* and *Fall*, Dark Horse commissioned Anderson to write and Gossett to pencil *Redemption*, a five issue finale to the *Tales* series that would complete the story of Ulic Qel-Droma. Although Veitch had written a long treatment outlining Qel-Droma's ultimate fate, Anderson and Gossett decided to take the conclusion in another direction. Gossett stayed at Anderson's house for a week where they beat out the story, page-by-page, panel-by-panel.

"I told him I wanted to work closely with him on the layouts to keep the panel count low and that if we were going to [SPOILER ALERT!] go so far as to kill Ulic Qel-Droma, then I really wanted to collaborate with him on how we did so," Gossett says. "He was very open to it and very accepting of ideas."

Redemption was not only a profound emotional experience for its protagonist, but also its creators.

"It was very powerful for us because we lived with this guy for so long and he was so close to us," Anderson says. "I remember just plotting out these last pages and how Ulic came to his end—a kind of heroic, but surprising end—and Chris is sitting across the table and he's sketching these last panels and he looked up at me, and he just had tears pouring down his face. He was just so moved by what we were doing. That's the best moment of the entire comic writing experience, I got to tell you."



REDEMPTION WAS A PROFOUND EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR ITS CREATORS.

- THIS BEAST IS FROM FRIGID MOUNTAINS OF KHAR DESA.

- IN THE GREAT BATTLE SOME ARE USED TO CARRY WARRIORS OR PAUL CANNONS.

TURRET ENCLOSURE



ALL OF SITH BEASTS ARE HORNED. AND SITH PEOPLE ADAPTED IN THEIR CULTURE THE USE OF HORNS AND OTHER ORNAMENTS. THIS IS ALSO MANIFESTED ON THEIR ARMORS.

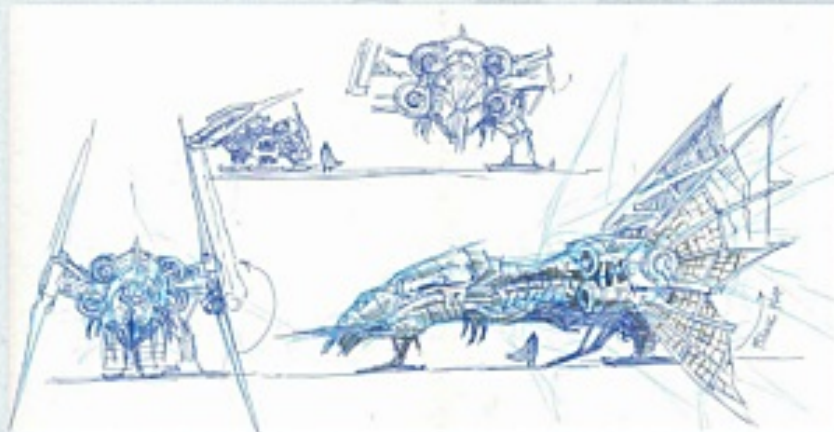
FUTURE TALES

After 35 issues over five years, revealing much of the history of the legendary Jedi and the Sith, *Tales of the Jedi* officially came to an end with *Redemption*. But that proved just the beginning for this era of *Star Wars*. The computer game *Knights of the Old Republic* relied on the comic series as source material to build a virtual Old Republic, and the game, in turn, spawned a comic series set 40 years after *Tales*, which ran for 50 issues. Moreover, the Expanded Universe novels (now *Legends*) and even the *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* television show drew inspiration from the Jedi and Sith lore that Veitch and Anderson had developed.

While it's been over 20 years since *Tales of the Jedi* began, the series remains a special memory for its creator and instigator, Tom Veitch. "I'm happy to have had the chance to work on the comics, and I confess that sometimes when my wife and I are talking about *Star Wars*, the ideas and images will start to flow. It's a galaxy of infinite possibilities." ☐

Opposite page, clockwise from top: Another Corrasco concept sketch for Mandalore, stating he's at least 7' tall; a Mandalore "bug" ship designed by Corrasco; surface of the Sith planet Korriban, inspired by Corrasco's fascination with Egyptian and Mesopotamian history.

This page, from top: Corrasco's designs for the "Sith beasts" that Sith warriors would mount and ride; concept sketches for Exar Kun's worship by Corrasco; Bob Cooper writes to Corrasco: "Lucasfilm liked all your new sketches except for the Dark Lord sarcophagus—which they say looks too much like an Egyptian sarcophagus. They'd like you to revise the one design and resubmit it."



THIRD,

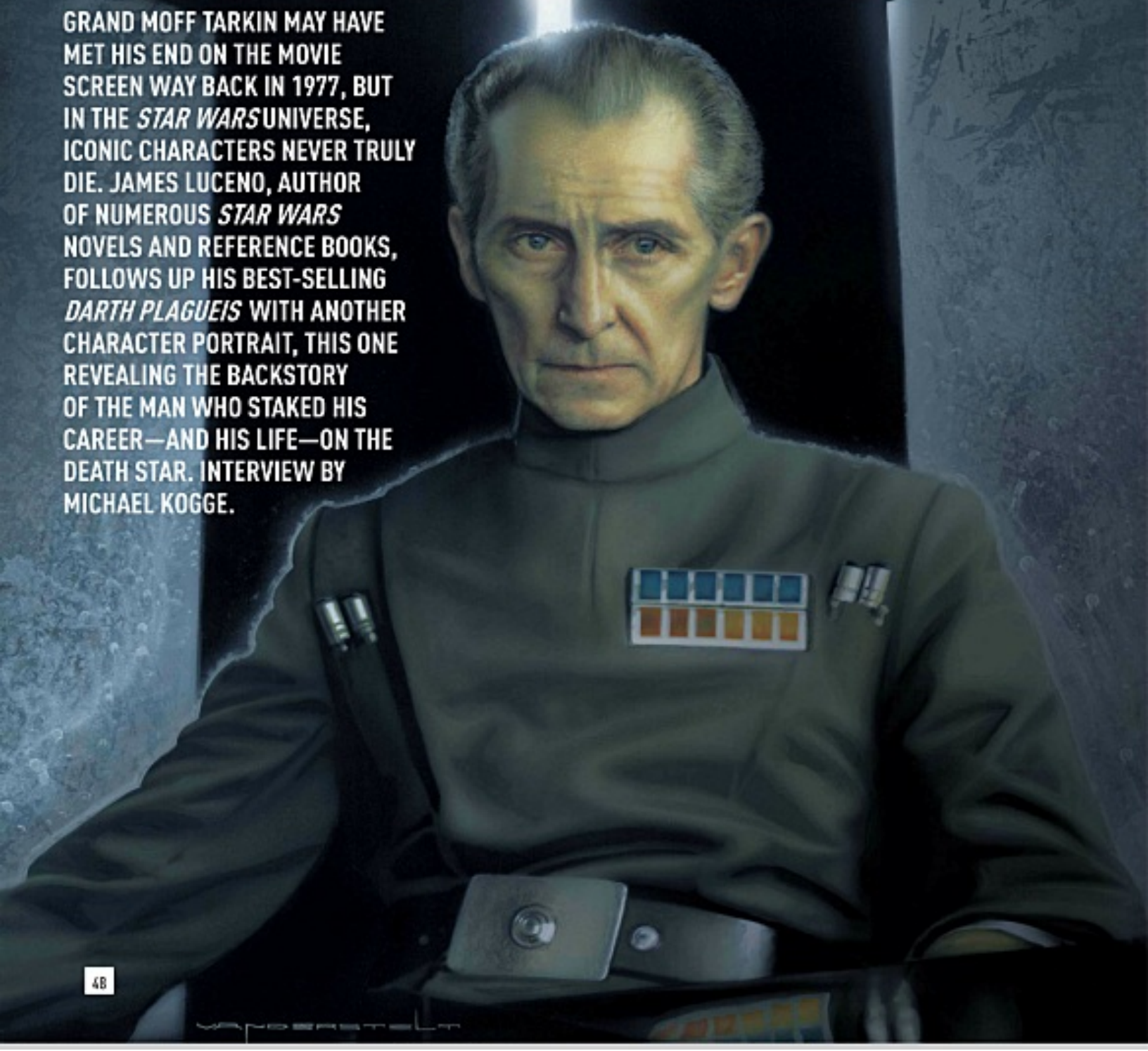
LUCASFILM LIKED ALL YOUR NEW SKETCHES EXCEPT FOR THE DARK LORD SARCOPHAGUS—WHICH THEY SAY LOOKS A LITTLE BIT TOO MUCH LIKE AN EGYPTIAN SARCOPHAGUS. THEY'D LIKE YOU TO REVISE THIS ONE DESIGN.



Final version of Dark Lord

TARKIN REVEALED

GRAND MOFF TARKIN MAY HAVE MET HIS END ON THE MOVIE SCREEN WAY BACK IN 1977, BUT IN THE *STAR WARS* UNIVERSE, ICONIC CHARACTERS NEVER TRULY DIE. JAMES LUCENO, AUTHOR OF NUMEROUS *STAR WARS* NOVELS AND REFERENCE BOOKS, FOLLOWS UP HIS BEST-SELLING *DARTH PLAGUEIS* WITH ANOTHER CHARACTER PORTRAIT, THIS ONE REVEALING THE BACKSTORY OF THE MAN WHO STAKED HIS CAREER—AND HIS LIFE—ON THE DEATH STAR. INTERVIEW BY MICHAEL KOGGE.



How did the novel *Tarkin* come about? I was actually trying to interest Lucasfilm in a novel about the Emperor, set between *A New Hope* and *The Empire Strikes Back*, when, at the start of last fall, the newly instated Story Group asked if I would be interested in writing a novel focusing on Tarkin.

What was your impression of Grand Moff Tarkin when you first saw *Star Wars* in 1977? Has it changed since?

From the beginning, I thought that Tarkin—comrade of the Dark Lord of the Sith, commander of the Death Star, who seemed to take it upon himself to destroy a “peaceful” planet—had at the very least to be one of the Imperial elites, and was perhaps one of its architects as well. His appearances in *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* began to suggest another side of him—more calculating than merely ruthless—and also more informed about the covert nature of the Empire than merely subservient to it.

Did you watch any old Peter Cushing movies to capture Tarkin’s voice and mannerisms? Any favorites?

I was a fan of Cushing well before he appeared in *A New Hope*, from films like *The Revenge of Frankenstein*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *Dr. Terror’s House of Horrors*, and *Dr. Who and the Daleks*. He was a horror film staple of mine long before I got to know him as Governor Wilhuff Tarkin.

How does Tarkin differ from the other main villains in the *Star Wars* pantheon? Tarkin’s skills don’t derive from the Force, but from the power of his intellect and his long years of military indoctrination. His sense of loyalty is not undermined by naked ambition. His seeming heartlessness is rooted in the belief that order is preferable to chaos, and that laws are what separate true sentients from beasts. For Tarkin, morality is situational, and compassion is little more than misguided sentiment.

When writing the novel, what surprised you most about Tarkin’s character?

Tarkin kept demonstrating his analytical abilities and tactical skills. He’s anything but playful, but he enjoys a good joke or an inspired prank. He is an oligarch of the most extreme sort, and believes that life is, at its core, violent and predatory.

A New Hope portrays Tarkin as a prim and polished technocrat who hides a nature so savage that he feels no guilt when it comes to annihilating whole planets. What from his background did you imagine made him to be so ruthless?



Tarkin author James Luceno.
Photo: Karen Ann Lidstone

The question goes to the heart of the novel. Tarkin’s world view is shaped by a series of challenges and what amount to initiations that commence when he is eleven years old. To a degree—in that many of the trials are imposed on him—he is “created” to be the callous commander he eventually becomes.

Some chapters read like a biography at the beginning, complete with fragments of a memoir, then focus on a particular scene. Other chapters move out of the chronology of the main plot to provide glimpses of Tarkin’s early life. How did this approach help you to tell the story you wanted to tell?

The book is a kind of origin tale, but told from the perspective of a narrator who is clearly writing long after Tarkin’s fiery

“TARKIN’S SEEMING HEARTLESSNESS IS ROOTED IN THE BELIEF THAT ORDER IS PREFERABLE TO CHAOS.”

demise, and has access to a wide range of top secret information. It is my hope that the formative scenes, in conjunction with the unfolding story, elucidate not only how he rose to prominence in the Empire, but also how he enjoys a kind of parity with Darth Vader. Without the continuity constraints, I might have been tempted to write a more traditional biographical novel.

One of the great moments in the novel is a conversation between Count Dooku and Tarkin. Given that actors Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee (Count Dooku) were close friends in real life and appeared in many films together, what was it like to write that scene?

That scene was fun to imagine: having these two topnotch British actors playing off one another in the *Star Wars* saga, as they had in so many classic horror films.

While reading the novel, one can’t help but hear echoes of Tarkin’s famous line from the first film: “Fear will keep the local systems in line. Fear of this battle station.” Why does Tarkin believe fear is the supreme means of control?

Even with the military might the Empire has amassed, its ships and forces can’t be everywhere at once. Fear, then—of brutal reprisal—substitutes for force. This is Tarkin’s true purpose in destroying the planet Alderaan: the far-flung worlds of the galaxy need to be on notice that none enjoy special privilege; that none are indispensable. Strict adherence to the dictates of the Empire is all that matters. Stray at your own peril.

Outside of *Star Wars*, what else inspired or influenced you during the writing of the novel? Machiavelli’s *The Prince*? Any figures from our history?

Machiavelli, yes, along with Oliver Cromwell, various members of the Nazi inner circle, uber-soldier Adrian Carton de Wiart, American Civil War strategist James J. Andrews, swordswoman Julia d’Aubigny, celebrated pirate Anne Bonny, and General George Armstrong Custer, among others.

The book mentions that Darth Vader was the Empire’s first terror weapon, which would make him the living, breathing manifestation of the Death Star. Might this be why Tarkin respects Vader

so much, and the two men who seem to be polar opposites on the surface become such staunch allies and, dare I say, friends?

Tarkin is somewhat mystified by Vader until he more or less puts two and two together regarding Vader’s relationship with the Emperor. The novel is

set in the early years of the Empire, during which both Vader and Tarkin are still making their bones, as it were. Tarkin suspects that there is more to Vader than meets the eye, and appreciates Vader’s willingness to use the Force in ways the Jedi denied themselves.

When tasked to pen a novel about one of the galaxy’s cruelest villains—a man who ordered planetary genocide without hesitation—there is a danger of making such an evil man seem sympathetic. How did you strike the right balance? I’ve found that the only way to do this—with Tarkin, Vader, the Emperor, or Darth Plagueis—is by creating a grayscale background against which events swirl, and about which the narrator is largely nonjudgmental—almost scientific in his dispassion.

What are you working on now that fans might like to read? Any *Star Wars* stories you’d love to tell in the future?

Hard to see, that future is. Time will tell. ☺

Turn the page to read an exclusive extract from James Luceno’s forthcoming novel *Tarkin*!



AN EXCLUSIVE EXTRACT FROM

TARKIN

BY JAMES LUCENO,
WITH ART BY JOE CORRONEY AND BRIAN MILLER

Like many former Separatist bastions, Murkhana was a dying world. The lingering atmospheric effects of years of orbital bombardment and beam-weapon assaults had raised the temperature of the world's seas and killed off coastal coral reefs that had once drawn tourists from throughout the Tion Cluster. What had been wave-washed black beaches were now stretches of fathomless quicksand, and what had been sheltered coves were stagnant shallows, rife with gelatinous sea creatures that had risen to the evolutionary fore when the fish had died. Battered by relentless squalls of acid rain, the once graceful, spiraling structures of Murkhana City were pitted and cracked, and had turned the color of disease-ridden bone. Even when the rains ceased, menacing clouds hung over the bleached landscape, blotting out light and leaving the air smelling like rancid cheese. Descending through the atmosphere was like dropping into a simmering cauldron of witch's brew.

Below was what remained of the seaside hexagonal spaceport and the quartet of ten kilometer-long bridges that had linked it to the city; the Corporate Alliance landing field was slagged and tipped on the massive piers that had supported it, and the bridges had collapsed into the frothing waters. Arriving starships were now directed to the city's original spaceport at the base of the hills.

"Governor Tarkin, we have a visual on the landing zone," the captain said as the ship pierced a final low-lying layer of dirty cloud, revealing the ravaged city spread out beneath them from sea to surrounding hills like some terrain exported from a nightmare. "Spaceport control says that it's up to us to find a place to set down, as their guidance systems are no longer in service and the terminal has been shut down. Immigration and customs have relocated to the inner city."

Tarkin shook his head in disgust. "I suspect no one makes use of them. What do our scanners tell us of the atmosphere?"

"Atmosphere is a mess, but breathable," the comm officer said, her eyes fixed on the sensor board. "Background radiation is at tolerable levels." Swiveling to Tarkin, she added, "Sir, you might want to consider wearing a transpirator."

Tarkin watched smoke pour into the sky from fires that might have been burning for six years. He considered the specialist's advice for a moment, gradually warming to the idea of being the only one among the mission personnel to be bare-headed, thus appearing more the commanding officer.

"Looking for an adequate site, Governor," the captain said.

Tarkin leaned toward the viewport to assess the landing field. It was impossible to tell the bomb craters from the circular repulsorlift pits that had once functioned as service areas for the Separatists' spherical core ships. The edges of the field were lined with ruined hemispherical docking bays and massive rectangular hangars, their roofs blown open or caved in. The façade of the sprawling terminal building had avalanched onto the field, and the interior had been gutted by fire. Ships of various size and function were parked at random, though most of them looked as if they hadn't seen space in a long while.

"Twenty-five degrees east," Tarkin said finally.

"We'll have just enough room."

Vader entered the command cabin as repulsors were lowering the corvette toward the cracked permacrete.

"A world I never expected to see again," Tarkin said.

"Nor I, Governor," Vader said.

"So let us be quick about it."

Tarkin scanned the immediate area as Carrion Spike began to settle on her landing gear and the instruments were shut down. Only a handful of starships occupied their corner of the uneven field, including a decrepit forty-year-old Judicial cruiser and a sleek and obviously rapid black frigate bristling with weapons, its broad bow designed to suggest slanting eyes and bloody fangs thrusting from a cruel mouth.

"Charming," Tarkin said. "And very much in keeping with the surroundings."

Wedging a brimmed command cap into the pocket of his tunic, he joined Vader and eight of the stormtroopers as they were filing from the ship. Barely through the airlock, he could already taste acid on his tongue. They had just reached the foot of the boarding ramp when a teetering low-altitude assault transport soared into view, its wing-mounted repulsorlift turbines straining as it dropped from the sky to hover alongside

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the Carrion Spike. Two Imperial stormtroopers in scratched and dented armor leapt from the open side hatch, while well-armed door gunners kept watch over the field.

"Welcome to Murkhana, sirs," their squad leader said, offering a lazy salute.

Tarkin heard stifled laughter from someone inside the gunship. Adorning the vehicle's vaned sliding hatch was the faded insignia of the Twelfth Army.

His posture reflecting obvious displeasure, Vader appraised the noisy gunship. "Are you certain that this relic is capable of carrying us, Squad Leader, or might we end up carrying it?"

The stormtrooper glanced over his shoulder at the gunship. "Sorry to report that we've no choice, Lord Vader. The rest are in even worse shape."

"Why is that?" Tarkin stepped forward to ask.

"Sabotage, sir. We're not well liked by the locals."

"No one asked them to like you, Squad Leader," Vader snapped. With a swirl of his cloak, he climbed aboard the gunship, followed by his personal stormtroopers.

Tarkin paused to comlink Carrion Spike's captain. "We're leaving four stormtroopers to guard the ship. Keep the comlink open and contact me at the first sign of trouble."

"Acknowledged, Governor," the comm officer said.

Vader extended a hand to Tarkin and pulled him up onto the deteriorated deck plates of the gunship's deployment platform.

"Go," the Dark Lord shouted to the cockpit crew.

The gunship lifted shakily off the landing field and began to wheel toward the heart of Murkhana City. Placing himself behind one of the door gunners, Tarkin grabbed hold of an overhead strap and peered out the open hatchway.

He wasn't surprised to see that most of the city's charred, devastated buildings had yet to be demolished. Facing sanctions, the local government had not been able to grow the economy, and the substantially reduced population had been forced to rely on black marketeers for goods and resources. Rusting remnants of the war, carbon-scored Hailfire, spider, and crab droids stood idle in the desolate streets, picked clean of usable parts by gangs of scavengers. Scattered among them were a couple of burned-out Republic AT-TE and turbo tanks, along with a Trident transport. The hulk of a Commerce Guild warship protruded like a broken tooth close to what remained of the Argente Tower, which was itself a husk.

Breath-masked residents scurried for cover as the gunship raced over glass-littered avenues, past boarded-up storefronts, toppled monuments, and gloomy cantinas. Packs of famished animals roved the alleyways, and nearly every street corner hosted crews of smugglers and hoodlums. Tarkin caught glimpses of limping war veterans—Koorivar with broken cranial horns, Aqualish with missing tusks, and Gossams with crooked necks—along with children stricken with hideous birth defects.

As the gunship veered through a turn, a hunk of twisted metal slammed into the hatch's retracted door, hurled by a young woman who had stepped boldly from a lopsided doorway and stood in the street, hands on hips, as if challenging the Imperials to reply.

"Permission to exterminate, sir," one of the stormtroopers said, his blaster rifle braced against his shoulder.

Vader stretched out his gloved hand to lower the weapon. "We haven't come all this way to instigate a riot."



And yet two city blocks later, catching sight of defaced military recruitment posters and walls vandalized by hand-scrawled insults aimed at the Emperor, he turned to Tarkin to say: "We should put this place out of its misery."

"Too magnanimous," Tarkin said. "Though it may come to that."

The gunship began to shed velocity as it crossed a cratered plaza; it came to a hovering halt in the middle of a broad concourse obstructed by a collapsed coral archway.

"We're here, sirs," the squad leader said.

"Which building?" Tarkin asked, then followed the line of the stormtrooper's extended hand to see a squat structure with rounded corners three blocks away.

"Originally the property of the Corporate Alliance, sir," the squad leader continued. "A medcenter, until it was used to house a deflector shield generator that protected a vital Separatist landing platform."

"And the current proprietor?"

"Unknown, sir. The place has changed hands several times since the end of the war. Identities of the various owners are buried under layers of phony documentation."

"You have been maintaining surveillance?" Vader asked.

"Continuous since receiving orders from Coruscant three weeks back, Lord Vader. But we haven't observed anyone coming or going. The locals tend to steer clear of this entire area."

"Then you have no one in custody."

"No one, Lord Vader."

Tarkin's eyes clouded over with suspicion. "Yes, but who might have been watching you while you were watching the building?"

Vader nodded. "Yes, Governor, it might very well be a trap."

The stormtrooper indicated several nearby buildings. "We've installed rooftop snipers there, there, and there, Lord Vader."

"Are you carrying remotes?"

"We have a couple of AC-ones onboard, along with an ASN retrofitted with a holotransmitter."

"Those will do. Prepare them."

The gunship touched down and Vader stepped from the deployment platform, all but floating to the buckled street. When his stormtroopers had followed, he turned to Sergeant Crest.

"Take four of your men and trail the remotes inside. We will monitor the holofeeds from here. Perform a full reconnaissance of the building, but do not enter the room where the devices are said to be located until we follow on your all-clear."

Crest saluted and pointed to four of the stormtroopers. By then the spherical remotes had already been tasked and were whirring off toward the building. The squad leader placed a handheld holoprojector on the deployment platform deck plates and enabled it. A moment later the device began receiving transmissions from one of the remotes. While Vader paced, Tarkin watched as illuminated views of narrow hallways and short staircases resolved above the holoprojector. The squad leader shifted feeds from one remote to the next, but the views and sounds remained largely unchanged: puddled hallways, dark stairwells, dripping water, creaking doors, indistinct noises that may have come from still-working machines.

Almost an hour passed before the voice of Sergeant Crest issued from the comlink of one of his subordinates.

"Lord Vader, the building is clear. We're holding at the head of a corridor leading to the device storage room. I've tasked one of the remotes to guide you to our position."

Leaving the local stormtroopers to establish a perimeter outside the building, Tarkin, Vader, and the remainder of the Coruscant contingent entered, glow rods in hand as they trailed the tasked remote through some of the corridors and up and down some of the stairways they had been shown earlier.

In short order they had rendezvoused with Crest and the others, fifty meters from massive, retrofitted sliding doors that appeared to seal the storeroom.

Vader gestured for the squad leader to send one of the remotes down the final stretch, then to follow with four of his troopers. Tarkin tracked their wary advance on the sliding doors, which Crest parted just widely enough to allow passage for the remote. When after a long moment the remote exited, Crest signaled for Vader, Tarkin, and the others to proceed.

First to reach the sliding doors, Vader came to a sudden halt.

"The remote found nothing untoward?" he asked Crest.

"Nothing, Lord Vader."

Vader's breathing filled the corridor. "Something..."

Tarkin watched him closely. Vader's exceptional instincts had alerted him to a threat of some sort. But what? He began to think through the holotransmissions of the remotes' dizzying

**BREATH-MASKED
RESIDENTS SCURRIED FOR COVER
AS THE GUNSHIP RACED OVER
GLASS-LITTERED AVENUES. PAST
BOARDED-UP STOREFRONTS,
TOPPLED MONUMENTS,
AND GLOOMY CANTINAS.**



exploration of the confused interior of the building. On every level the surveillance droids had reached dead ends similar to the one he, Vader, and the stormtroopers now faced. Did that mean that the storeroom was several stories high? Perhaps it had been an atrium before it became a storage space. Tarkin thought back to the squad leader's description of the building: "A medcenter . . . Housed a deflector shield generator . . ."

Tarkin couldn't imagine such an enormous piece of machinery having been assembled in place. Which could mean—

"Lord Vader, this isn't the primary entrance," he said.

Vader turned to him.

"Who would be fool enough to haul communications devices through these corridors and up and down these stairways?" Tarkin gestured upward with his chin. "I suspect they were delivered here through a rooftop access. The sliding doors could lead to an ambush of some sort."

Vader took a moment to consider it, then looked at Crest. "You've failed me again, Sergeant."

"Lord Vader, the remote—"

"The rooftop," Tarkin interrupted.

Vader glanced at him but said nothing.

They exited the building by the same route they had taken earlier. Once outside, Vader ordered the squad leader to call for the gunship, and all of them scampered up onto the deployment platform. On the building's flat roof they discovered a well-concealed and functional turbolift shaft, five meters in diameter, transparent, and safe to use. Surveying the vast room while they were descending, Tarkin spotted the remains of a reception counter centered among stacks of metal shipping containers and exposed machines.

"No one touches anything until I've had a look," he told the stormtroopers. "And take care where you walk. The doors may not be alone in being rigged."

While Vader, Crest, and some of the others moved off to investigate the secondary entrance, Tarkin, feeling as if he were stepping back in time, began to meander through the rows created by the stacked containers and devices.

It had been just nine months after the Battle of Geonosis that Count Dooku's scientists had succeeded in slicing into the Republic HoloNet by seeding the spaceways with hyperwave transceiver nodes of a novel design. The Separatists could have kept quiet about the infiltration and tasked the nodes to gather intelligence about Republic military operations. Instead, Dooku—as if suddenly intent on winning hearts and minds rather than defeating the Republic with his droid armies—began using the HoloNet to broadcast propaganda Shadowfeeds, providing Separatist accounts of battle wins and disinformation about Republic war crimes, and in the end spreading apprehension among the populations of the Core Worlds that a Separatist victory was imminent.

It was, however, Separatist success in jamming Republic communication relays that had brought Tarkin into play. Together with operatives of the Republic's fledgling cryptanalysis department and elements of the Twelfth Army, Tarkin had been sent to Murkhana both to spearhead the invasion and to oversee the dismantling of the Shadowfeed operation.

Running his hands now over S-thread jammers, signal eradicators, and HoloNet chafing devices, he recalled being among the first wave of clone trooper platoons to fight their way into the building that was the source of the Shadowfeeds; then, on overpowering the Separatist forces, torturing the captive scientists into revealing the secrets of their jamming and steganographic technology, and putting to death thousands of beings who had contributed to Dooku's scheme. The mission had constituted the first of Tarkin's covert operations undertaken for then supreme chancellor Palpatine. Murkhana had kicked off a year of similar successes—though it had ended in Tarkin's capture, torture, and incarceration in Citadel prison. With the Emperor's proclamation of the New Order, some aspects of the HoloNet had come under strict Imperial control, as much to provide the military with exclusive communications networks as to censor unauthorized news feeds. Tarkin was completing his initial survey of the components when Vader sought him out.

**TARKIN RECALLED BEING
AMONG THE FIRST WAVE OF
CLONE TROOPER PLATOONS TO FIGHT
THEIR WAY INTO THE BUILDING THAT
WAS THE SOURCE OF
THE SHADOWFEEDS.**

"The sliding doors were engineered to trigger a blast when opened fully," he said. "Odd that the remote failed to register the explosives."

Tarkin gestured to the stacks of devices. "Whoever assembled this array found a way to blind the remotes."

Vader looked around. "Imperial Security's operative made no mention of a rigged entrance."

Tarkin pinched his lower lip. "That could mean that the explosives were only recently installed."

"With the building under constant surveillance?"

"The street entrances, yes," Tarkin said. "Probably not the roof."

Vader absorbed that in silence, then said, "Puzzling, even so. All this merely to lure and murder an investigative team?"

"I doubt that the door trap was meant for us, Lord Vader."

"Intruders of a more ordinary sort? Would-be thieves, black marketeers?" Vader gazed about him in what struck Tarkin as mounting vexation. "Have you found any unfamiliar devices?"

"Not yet," Tarkin said.

"Then it is all too obvious. These devices were deliberately placed where they could be discovered. This is a stage set."

"Perhaps," Tarkin said. "But we're going to need to investigate every container to be certain there's nothing new among the devices. This cache may date from the war, but that doesn't negate that the components appear to be fully functional and capable of interrupting or corrupting HoloNet signals."

Vader was dismissive. "Technology that has been available for nearly a decade, Governor."

"The question is, why are these devices here?"

"Someone found them elsewhere and moved them here for safekeeping until their value could be determined."

"That would explain the rigged doors . . ." Tarkin said. "But it's also possible that whoever originally found the cache made use of some of the components to engineer the false distress call transmitted to Sentinel Base."

Vader fell silent for a long moment, then said, "I agree. Your proposal, then?"

Tarkin glanced around. "We can everything and record and transmit to Coruscant any serial numbers or markings we find. Any suspect components should be relocated to the Carrion Spike and also returned to Coruscant for further analysis. The rest should be destroyed."

Vader nodded in agreement.

Tarkin glanced around again and sighed with purpose. "We have our work cut out for us."

"The stormtroopers can see to most of it," Vader said. "There is someone I wish to speak with before we return to the Core."

Tarkin showed him a questioning look.

"The Imperial Security Bureau asset who first reported the find." 🗡️



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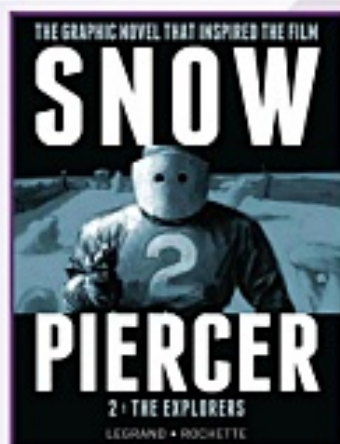
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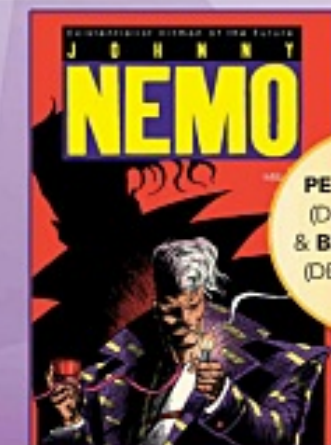


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"THE NAME'S CROSS. JAHAN CROSS."

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Orphaned at a young age, Jahan Cross is recruited to be an agent of the Empire—operating undercover and taking on jobs that the Imperial military cannot take on themselves. That's the premise of the comic-book series *Star Wars: Agent of the Empire* the debut story of which, "Iron Eclipse" saw he and his droid companion IN-GA 44 take on a mission to investigate a rogue Imperial colonel with links to piracy and a virus that could cause mass murder across the galaxy...

WHY IT'S A CLASSIC

Star Wars has always proved able to adopt facets of other genres and make them its own, from the Western and Samurai elements of *A New Hope* and beyond. The spy genre however, popularized most famously by the James Bond movies, had been explored relatively little in *Star Wars* before *Agent of the Empire* debuted. There was spying that occurred in the *Star Wars* galaxy of course—from the snout-faced Garindan

to the Bothans—but it largely went on behind-the-scenes or on the fringes of the main action.

That omission was a curious one, as James Bond-style spy thrillers share many elements with *Star Wars*—action sequences, chases, nail-biting tension, humor in the face of death, romance and more.

Interestingly, as the title of the series suggests, Jahan Cross spies for the Empire, not the Rebellion, proving that in the spy genre, there are no heroes. The morality of a spy's actions is merely a point of view. As Cross himself comments, "I'm not a hero. I'm an agent of the Empire."

One of the elements that make the series so enjoyable is the way it gives a space opera twist to the familiar tropes of the spy genre. Instead of being given a series of ingenious gadgets by a "Q"-like figure, Cross is given a feminine droid with built-in weapons—a gadget and a Bond girl rolled into one! Instead of jetting around the world to Turkey or Japan, our protagonist is traveling by starship to other star systems such as Serenno or Reltooine.

Agent of the Empire brings what was once a largely behind-the-scenes element of the *Star Wars* galaxy front and center, and has a lot of fun with it in the process.

ESSENTIAL TRIVIA

Star Wars: Agent of the Empire features appearances from several well-known characters and other favorites from the *Star Wars* movies, including Boba Fett, Han Solo, Chewbacca and the *Millennium Falcon*.

WHAT THEY SAID

"That was my intention from the start—one part *Star Wars* and one part spy thriller. The [*Star Wars* and espionage] genres actually overlap reasonably well: multiple exotic locations and lots of room for humor, large-scale villains and a roguish character at the center of it all. It is *Star Wars*, but with a Bond-ian feel." —John Ostrander, writer, *Star Wars: Agent of the Empire*

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PUBLISHING

THE LATEST FROM THE WORLD OF *STAR WARS* PUBLISHING! WORDS: DAN WALLACE

ART IN THE PUBLIC EYE

Explore Nearly Four Decades of the Best *Star Wars* Posters in the Latest *Star Wars* Art Book

When it comes to the most familiar and most iconic pieces of *Star Wars* art, it's all about the posters. As a blockbuster film series, the *Star Wars* saga has spawned famous examples of the craft including Tom Jung's *Star Wars* one-sheet and Roger Kastel's *The Empire Strikes Back* painting, which took inspiration from *Gone with the Wind*. In the decades since, *Star Wars* posters have been reproduced, remixed, and reinvented while still holding true to the essence of their faraway galaxy.

Star Wars Art: Posters, the fifth book in the *Star Wars* Art series, collects the best poster art from the six *Star Wars* films and the animated series *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*. Also included are limited-edition posters, prints created by underground artists for special showings, and rare looks at unfinished and rejected poster concepts from the original trilogy. The previous books in the *Star Wars* Art series—*Visions*, *Comics*, *Illustration*, and *Concept*—featured the direct input of George



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SARLACCOLOR

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Lucas as image curator. *Star Wars Art: Posters* is no exception. "George is a deeply knowledgeable and passionate collector of fine art," explains Eric Klopfer, editor at Abrams Books. "He wished to share with fans his own personal favorites from the Lucasfilm Archives. Our shared goal became to present the best of *Star Wars* art as art, without logos and type, and presented no differently from how paintings would be collected in a traditional exhibition catalog or monograph."

The posters selected for inclusion span the globe and the decades. And fans who think they've seen it all may be in for a surprise. "We invited Roger Kastel to contribute the book's introduction, but little did we know that he had two unique pieces of art," says Klopfer. "An early painted concept treatment for his *Empire Strikes Back* theatrical one-sheet, and a final painted version of that poster based on his original concept sketch. The former was based on preliminary costume designs and shows Han in a roll-neck sweater and peacoat. The latter is striking for its minimalism, featuring an imposing specter of Darth Vader looming over a portrait of Luke, mounted on a tauntaun, against a background of stars."

One of the pleasures of *Star Wars Art: Posters* is its sheer range of art styles, from old-school painted promotions to modern Mondo-style prints. "After countless art books and the amount of fan art available on the web, you'd think that there would be a figurative 'event horizon' on *Star Wars* art," says Klopfer. "But from what I've seen, not a week goes by without an artist proving that wrong by producing *Star Wars*-inspired work that's charged with the capacity to delight, inspire, and surprise. The *Star Wars* galaxy is a vast fictional universe, and artists and writers will always find space within it to fill, whatever their personal styles may be."

Star Wars Art: Posters features a foreword by Drew Struzan and an

introduction by Roger Kastel and is available in both standard and Limited Edition formats. Bound in a hardcover cloth case, the Limited Edition comes with additional illustrations and five hand-signed giclée prints by Stuzan, Kastel, Jung, Howard Chaykin, and Boris Vallejo.

The *Star Wars Art* series will continue into Spring 2015 with a collection of frameable prints, but *Posters* represents

a fitting capstone to George Lucas's personal vision. "*Star Wars Art* has come to fruition exactly as George conceived it," says Klopfer. "Aside from their archival value, the books are unique in publishing history. They represent a writer, filmmaker, and creator's personal retrospective on his own contribution to cinema, popular culture, and modern mythmaking, as seen through the art of those he's inspired."

Black and white concept treatment for *Revenge of the Sith* by Drew Struzan





REPORTING FOR DUTY

The Secrets of the Imperial Military Are Yours in *Star Wars: Imperial Handbook*



White-armored stormtroopers. Arrowhead-shaped Star Destroyers. Elephantine AT-ATs. A Death Star that can shatter planets. Many of the most unforgettable elements in the *Star Wars* saga are the products of the Imperial military, an iron-fisted regime devoted to cold precision and overwhelming force. In *Star Wars: Imperial Handbook*, readers can learn the secrets reserved only for commanders in the Emperor's service.

Presented as an actual, in-universe artifact, *Imperial Handbook* sheds light on the inner workings of an Empire prepared to grind all resistance to dust.

The Imperial Army, Navy, Stormtrooper Corps, and the Department of Military Research each get their say, featuring the perspectives of Grand Moff Tarkin, General Tagge, Admiral Yularen, Admiral Antonio Motti, and more. From military philosophy and battle tactics to mission reports and classified documents, it's all here.

And that's only one side of the story! Because the book later fell into the hands of the Rebel Alliance, notes and commentary from top rebel commanders fill the margins. Those who have jotted down their thoughts include General Dodonna, Princess Leia, Han Solo, Luke

Skywalker, General Madine, General Rieekan, Wedge Antilles, and Mon Mothma.

"*Imperial Handbook* is our fourth Deluxe Edition collaboration with Lucasfilm exploring the *Star Wars* universe," says Mike Oprins, president of becker&mayer! Books. "It is worthy to stand among its predecessors. Our teams have again gone above and beyond to create an in-world exploration of the Empire that will engage every *Star Wars* fan, from the collector to the casual alike. From the collectable case to the packaging to the surprises inside the book and the case, it is an awesome addition to the series that also includes *The Jedi Path*, *Book of Sith*, and *The Bounty Hunter Code*."

The sleek mechanical case that houses *Imperial Handbook* slides opens at the touch of a button with lights and authentic *Star Wars* sounds. Removable items stored inside include a Rebel Alliance artifact registration card and an Order of

Glory medal minted by the Empire. The 160-page book is written by Daniel Wallace and features more than 85 original illustrations by artists including Chris Trevas, Chris Reiff, Joe Corroney, John Van Fleet, Maciej Rebisz, Russell Walks, and Velvet Engine Studio.

"This closely guarded handbook bears witness to the core philosophies and flawed practices for the Imperial military," says J. W. Rinzler, executive editor at Lucasfilm. "With handwritten annotations from Rebel Alliance leaders and a one-of-a-kind Imperial Order of Glory medal, *Imperial Handbook* delivers a galaxy far, far away straight into your hands."



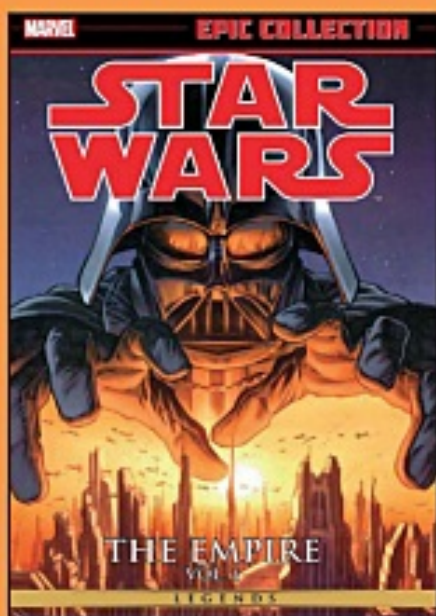
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DARKNESS RISING

Marvel Inaugurates Its All-New *Star Wars* Legends Epic Collection Series

As Marvel Comics gears up for a new chapter of *Star Wars* storytelling, the company is also reprinting the greatest adventures from the previous era in its prestigious Epic Collection format. *Star Wars* Legends Epic Collection: *The Empire* Vol. 1 is the initial offering in what will become a series of premium reprints, with this volume focusing on the birth of Imperial rule taking place between the events of Episode III *Revenge of the Sith* and Episode IV *A New Hope*. "These stories represent the vast history of the *Star Wars* universe in comics and graphic novel form," says David Gabriel, Marvel's senior vice president of sales and marketing. "So as part of that iconic legacy, we felt there was a strong reason to keep these great *Star Wars* stories alive, affordably priced in an exciting format that makes them easily accessible to fans whether they're familiar with the material or not. For the *Star Wars* Legends Epic Collections, we took a look at what was going on in our three upcoming titles for inspiration, but also kept an eye toward some of the best material published in the past 40 years."

Gabriel points out that the Marvel team made an effort to include fan favorite stories and lesser known treasures, while organizing the information to benefit fans who aren't already familiar with the vast comic book history that takes place in the galaxy far far away. "With the Epic



Collections we're taking a more structured approach, re-presenting these tales in a more chronological way, making it easy for fans who may not have unlimited knowledge of the vast *Star Wars* universe," he says. "This way they'll be able to easily jump in on any number of titles from different eras of the *Star Wars* Legends mythos and follow stories from start to finish. Once completed, the Epic Collection line will present full, unbroken runs of some

of the best *Star Wars* comics from the past 40 years."

Star Wars Legends Epic Collection: *The Empire* Vol. 1 collects stories previously published under the series titles of *Star Wars: Republic* (issues #78-80), *Star Wars: Purge* (including *Purge*, *Seconds to Die*, *The Hidden Blade*, and *The Tyrant's Fist*), *Darth Vader and the Lost Command* (issues #1-5), and *Star Wars: Dark Times* (issues #1-5). The stories are by John Ostrander, Randy Stradley, Alexander Freed, and Haden Blackman, with the stellar lineup of artists including Doug Wheatley, Luke Ross, Chris Scaif, Jim Hall, Marco Castiello, Andrea Chella, and Rick Leonardi.

Following the release of *The Empire* Vol. 1, fans will want to keep their eyes open for *The New Republic* Vol. 1 coming in May 2015. This new volume collects tales of villains and rogues including *Mara Jade: By the Emperor's Hand*, *Shadow of the Empire: Evolution*, *Boba Fett: Twin Engines of Destruction*, *The Jabba Tape*, and several originally published in *Star Wars Tales* (taken from issues #1, #3-5, #10, #14-15, #20 and #22).

Rise of the Sith Vol. 1 will follow in August 2015. Marvel plans to continue to put a spotlight on classic stories from the past four decades, covering the Old Republic, the New Republic, and more. What other releases are planned? "Too many to reveal just yet!" promises Gabriel.



INCOMING

THE LATEST *STAR WARS* GEAR YOU'LL WANT TO ADD TO YOUR COLLECTION! WORDS: JAMES BURNS

FANTASY FLIGHT GAMES



The Galactic Civil War comes to life in *Imperial Assault*, a new board game of cinematic *Star Wars* missions and tactical combat for two to five players. As daring rebels seek to overthrow the evil Empire, *Imperial Assault* offers you two distinct games, each of which provides its own window onto *Star Wars*. Whether you side with the Rebel Alliance operatives or the Galactic Empire, *Imperial Assault* immerses you in a galaxy of heroic rebels and outlaws, powerful villains, lightsabers, and blaster fire!

Imperial Assault's campaign game enables you to participate in a series of tales. Throughout your campaigns,

small bands of heroes rely upon their skill and wits to strike a blow against the limitless armies of the Empire. These heroes must engage in covert operations to undermine the Imperial schemes, fight alongside iconic heroes like Luke Skywalker, and battle deadly villains such as Darth Vader. Every campaign relates a dramatic story in the *Star Wars* universe that you can shape as you play it.

Simultaneously, the skirmish game within *Imperial Assault* allows you to challenge a friend for an entirely different head-to-head *Star Wars* game experience. In a skirmish, you and your friend wage

smaller combats set within the grander scope of the Galactic Civil War. Whether you battle to recover lost Holocons or to defeat a raiding party, every skirmish offers new dangers and excitement as rebel and Imperial strike teams struggle to gain the upper hand.

Imperial Assault comes with everything you need in the box to get started, including 34 detailed plastic figures, 59 double-sided map tiles, 11 custom dice, over 250 cards, over 150 assorted tokens, the Luke Skywalker ally pack and the Darth Vader villain pack.

Available: Q1 2015 Price: \$99.95

LEGO

The first LEGO Star Wars advent calendar was released in 2011, and included Yoda as Santa Claus! Then 2012 and 2013 saw Darth Maul and Jango Fett take on the unlikely role of Father Christmas! This year, the 274-piece calendar (#75056) includes seven minifigures as well as two droids, one of which is an awesome green astromech that resembles a Christmas tree with a conical head. Exclusive to this set is an all-new Darth Vader minifigure, which depicts Vader in giving mode, dressed as Santa and wearing a red cape. The set also includes a Christmas-themed clone trooper as well. As you unlock each week, an exclusive code will give you access to a new LEGO Star Wars video online. Available: Now
Price: \$39.99



HER UNIVERSE



HAN SOLO COSTUME DRESS

If you love scoundrels, then this Han Solo everyday cosplay dress will be the perfect fit for you. When someone says, "I love your Han Solo dress," you can say, "I know." Her Universe recommends going up one size if you want this dress to fit a bit looser. For reference, Ashley Eckstein wears a size Small.

DARTH VADER JAPANESE DRESS

Her Universe has taken the officially licensed art from its favorite Star Wars Japanese tea towel set, featuring Darth Vader with cherry blossoms, and turned it into a beautiful dress! Perfect for many occasions, the dark side never looked so feminine! This dress is super-soft and runs true to size.

Available: Now Price:
Darth Vader Japanese Dress \$60.00
Han Solo Costume Dress \$48.00



The products from the award-winning animated series *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* keep coming, and the latest are two ARC clone troopers: Echo and Fives in Phase II Armor as Sixth Scale Figures from their Militaries of *Star Wars* collection.

ARC CLONE TROOPER: ECHO PHASE II ARMOR SIXTH SCALE FIGURE

Given the official designation CT-21-0408, the clone trooper known as "Echo" earned his nickname early on for his tendency to repeat every order on assignment. Featuring a newly designed portrait with a battle-hardened expression, the heroic Republic soldier is fully equipped with ARC trooper armor distinguished with custom markings and blue handprint, a complete arsenal of weapons, and a full range of articulation to create action-packed displays and an exclusive base, which features Echo-based artwork.

Available: May 2015

Price: \$149.99




ARC CLONE TROOPER: FIVES PHASE II ARMOR SIXTH SCALE FIGURE

Preferring the nickname "Fives," CT-27-5555 barely made it past initiation, but proved his worth as the Clone Wars continued. Featuring a newly designed portrait with a true-grit expression and distinguishing "5" tattoo, the heroic Republic soldier is fully equipped with customized ARC trooper armor bearing markings to honor fallen comrades, a complete arsenal of weapons, and full range of articulation to create action-packed displays and comes with an exclusive base featuring Fives artwork.

Available: June 2015 Price: \$149.99





Obi-Wan Kenobi LEGENDARY SCALE FIGURE

Obi-Wan Kenobi is the second Legendary Scale Star Wars figure to come out from Sideshow Collectibles following Darth Maul, which shipped in early 2013. The Legendary Scale figures are in 1:2 scale. The Obi-Wan Kenobi figure stands over three-feet tall and features an authentic hand-tailored costume and a glowing blue lightsaber. The sculpt is taken from the pivotal moment of *A New Hope* as Obi-Wan makes his final preparations to confront Darth Vader for the last time. Available: Dec 2014 Price: \$1,999.00

OFFICIAL PIX

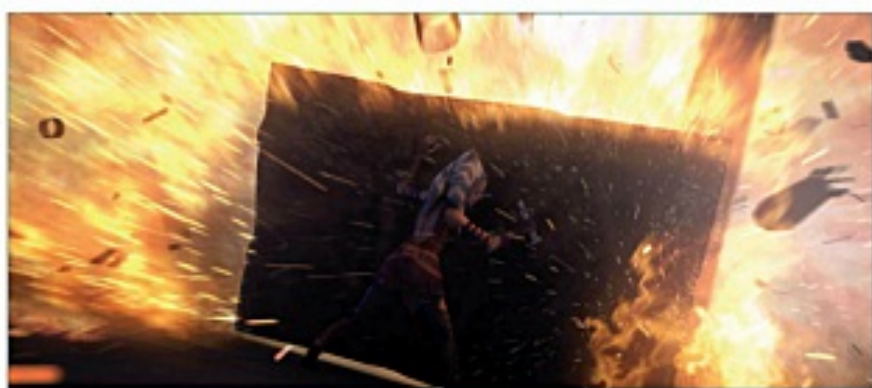
While *Star Wars Rebels* has blasted onto our television screens, that doesn't mean we've forgotten *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*!

Official Pix brings us new images from Season 6, also known as *The Lost Missions*, as well as some 10x20 Metallix photos of Ahsoka printed on premium Fujicolor crystal archive digital pearl paper, available at \$24.99 each. There's also some new images for fans of the Original Trilogy. The regular photos are available in various sizes: 8x10 (\$5.99), 11x14 (\$12.99) and 16x20 (\$23.99). Available: Now Price: As Above



Official Pix

Official Pix



Official Pix

Official Pix



Official Pix

Official Pix



Official Pix

Official Pix

GENTLE GIANT

BOBA FETT LIFE-SIZED VINTAGE MONUMENT

If the vintage Kenner-inspired jumbo action-figure reproductions, introduced by Gentle Giant in 2010, weren't big enough, then the life-sized monument versions should be perfect as a centerpiece in your collection. Following its stormtrooper and Darth Vader vintage monument statues, Gentle Giant releases their latest giant in the form of the ever-popular Boba Fett in staggering six-foot scale. Boba Fett has been digitally scanned from an authentic original mint-condition Kenner 3 1/4" action figure and this fully articulated monument also includes an authentic re-scaled replica blaster accessory. This limited edition piece is hand-painted and comes with a certificate of authenticity. Available: Q3 2015 Price: \$2,750



MATTEL

Here are two exciting new additions to the Hot Wheels Star Wars line featuring Darth Maul and C-3PO, which will be available late 2014 and early 2015 respectively. The first wave of Hot Wheels Star Wars character cars are in stores now, with new characters/vehicles shipping every couple of months. Available: Darth Maul Q4 2014/ C-3PO Q1 2015 Price: \$3.49 each



BOUNTY HUNTERS



MEET THE STARS, SHOW THE EVIDENCE, WIN THE BOUNTY! *STAR WARS INSIDER*'S BOUNTY HUNTERS SECTION IS SPONSORED BY KOTOBUKIYA. EACH ISSUE'S WINNER WILL RECEIVE A FANTASTIC KOTOBUKIYA *STAR WARS* STATUE KIT! VISIT WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/KOTOBUKIYA TO SEE MORE!

KOTOBUKIYA

BOUNTY WINNER!



Colin meets the voice of Tarkin, actor Stephen Stanton



Colin shows off his Jedi skills with Ashley Eckstein!

AN UNFORGETTABLE BIRTHDAY

These pictures are of my son, Colin. They were taken at Dallas Fan Days a few years ago. Colin, myself, and my 70-year-old father are all huge *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* fans, and are looking forward to *Star Wars Rebels*. We took Colin to Fan Days for his birthday to meet Ashley Eckstein, Stephen Stanton, Matthew Wood, Catherine Taber, and Tom Kane! It was the best birthday he has had to date.

The actors were all very gracious and took pictures with Colin, who was wearing a custom Jedi costume also made just for his birthday. We hope a show like this happens again soon.

—Chris Wall, by email

IS THAT REALLY HIM?

Last summer my son and I attended *Star Wars Celebration Europe*, where we thoroughly enjoyed three days of *Star Wars* geekery!

Before our return to England, in Dusseldorf airport, I spotted an Aston Martin DBS in the waiting area, which I thought a little unusual. Even more unusual was a gentleman wearing sunglasses, sitting in close proximity to the DBS. He looked somewhat familiar. I pulled out my camera and checked some photographs I had taken of the person I suspected this stranger to be. After checking the photographs, I still wasn't sure, and decided I would go and ask this gentleman if he was who I thought he was. I thought what the heck, if I'm wrong, I have disturbed a stranger for a matter of seconds and made a minor fool of myself. If it was who I suspected it to be and I hadn't taken the chance, I would have regretted it.

So I went over—and lo and behold it was none other than Mark Hamill, Luke Skywalker himself! My ten-year-old son took the photo as he is somewhat bashful, as was I at his age. I'm so glad I grew out of that though, otherwise I would not have this great photo!—Jody McCall, by email



Jody enjoys a chance meeting with Mark Hamill!



Joe meets the lovely Nathalie Cox AKA Juno Eclipse!

JUNO UNLEASHED

My son Joe got to meet actress Nathalie Cox, who played Juno Eclipse in *Star Wars: The Force Unleashed*. He could not wait to let her know that he is still waiting for *The Force Unleashed III*! Thanks Nathalie for being so good to our boy Joe and signing his game! —Carly Potter, by email

CAN YOU GO ONE BETTER?

HAVE YOU MET EWAN MCGREGOR? MAYBE YOU'VE JOKED AROUND WITH JAMES EARL JONES OR EVEN CUDDLED UP TO PETER CUSHING!? SEND PHOTOS, AND STORIES, OF YOUR ENCOUNTERS WITH THE STARS OF *STAR WARS* TO: BOUNTY HUNTERS, *STAR WARS INSIDER* VIA THE CONTACT DETAILS ON PAGE 3, OR EMAIL US AT STARWARSINSIDER@TITANEMAIL.COM



**VOL
86**

BANTHA TRACKS



**BY THE FANS
FOR THE FANS**

WHERE IN THE GALAXY DO YOU WANT TO GO?

Where is it you want to go? These Bantha Tracks fans give us their ideas for a multitude of destinations that require a good dose of creativity—and, of course, *Star Wars*.

TO ENDOR... WAIT... TO TASMANIA!

Biker scouts of the Thylacine Squad in Tasmania spent a day at Hollybank Reserve in the northern part of the state. Thanks to Nick Bishop for sending in these photos. Great stuff! Photos by Scott Wilson.



GET IN TRACKS!



TO THE SET OF EPISODE VII

Some time ago, R2-D2 Builder Lee Towersley sent *Bantha Tracks* a photograph of his newly organized display cabinet full of Astromechs. He noted at the time that he was missing a few of the R2-D2 figures, so he would be on the hunt for more. Once he started

down the droid path, did Towersley ever imagine it would dominate his destiny? That his droid-building skills would one day be put to use on the set of Episode VII? We're guessing not, but we are glad it worked out that way. Lee is pictured next to Episode VII director J.J. Abrams, with fellow droid builder Oliver Steeples, and producer Kathleen Kennedy (above right).

ON THE CREATIVE PATH

Jorge Colon crafts *Star Wars* works of art in Puerto Rico, including handcrafted action figures. Jeremy Bulloch as Boba Fett is featured, as well as the editor of *Bantha Tracks* as a Tusken Raider. Editor's note: LOVE the Tusken, Jorge!



Kathy Van Beuningen has created many *Star Wars* dolls in her own unique style, with great attention to detail. These are two of her latest creations.



TO A CONVENTION

At the Sci-Fi Expo in Irving, Texas, Daniel Castillo decided he wanted to stand out. He created Captain DeadMau5, a mash-up of Captain Rex & DJ DeadMau5. "It helped that I had the DeadMau5 head lit to pulsate to music, and gloves that lit up," he writes. "One of the most positive reactions was from the voice of Darth Maul himself, Sam Witwer."



FOR A DIP IN AN ICE COLD LAKE

"The Midwest Garrison and Nar Shaddaa Base were asked by the zookeepers at Lincoln Park Zoo to help bring attention to the annual Chicago Polar Bear Plunge, and we were excited to help," reports Phyllis Schulte.

The Lincoln Park zookeepers were raising funds and awareness for real polar bears, and their challenges with global warming and changing habitat. "Our mission was to accompany the zookeepers who were the 'rebels' to the beach, and then the Imperial forces would chase them into the lake. Two of us from Nar Shaddaa Base chose to go in as well," says Schulte.

The Polar Bear Plunge took place in frigid Lake Michigan on New Year's Day. Holy Sith! Those are some brave and crazy rebels, but we are very glad to read that the polar bears benefitted!

HUNTING WITH BOSSK

"As you know, there are not a lot of images of Bossk," writes Dan Peterson, who created this stunningly accurate costume from the scant movie references that exists. "My Bossk has been a big hit at events, and the photographs I have of it have received a lot of praise from diehard Star Wars fans for the costume's authenticity." Bantha Tracks agrees, Dan. Great Bossk!





TO A BIRTHDAY PARTY

Chris Sparacino, Sr., celebrated his 38th birthday with a Darth Vader cake created from a mold that his wife, Rebecca, picked out just for the occasion. "Rebecca, God bless her, allows me to display my love of Star Wars around the house," says Sparacino. "Years ago, my brother David took me to see *A New Hope*, and I have been hooked on Star Wars ever since. I met Mr. David Prowse at a Sci-Fi store back in 1995 and my love for Darth Vader was born."



Keith D. Voss, who has been a long-time reader of *Bantha Tracks* and *Star Wars Insider*, says that it was finally time for him to write to the magazine. "Recently my wife and I, both HUGE Star Wars fans, threw a party to celebrate her 30th birthday, and decided to make use of our Darth Vader cake form that we found at a comic shop in Vienna," writes Voss. "It was a dark chocolate red wine cake. We had a taste of the dark side, and we liked it!" Hey! Send us a piece!



ON THE PATH OF THE FAN FORCE

Lillian Skye describes herself as a "diehard Star Wars fan, from the Prequels and the Original Trilogy to the Expanded and Alternate Universes." Skye is active in Star Wars fan communities, and has been since childhood. She thanks her parents for giving her a good start in the universe.

"When I was two years old, my dad began showing me the movies," she recalls. Skye referred to Darth Vader as "Scary Man" and Emperor Palpatine as "Makeup Man."

To help focus on the movie's less frightening aspects, Skye's father decided that C-3PO and R2-D2 would become the main characters of the story for her. This started her lifelong affection for the droid duo. "In the past, I've contemplated not telling others that I'm a fan because of what people think when they hear the words 'Star Wars.' Namely, 'geek' and 'nerd,'" says Skye. "Over the years of being a fangirl, I've realized that I don't have to change because of what others think." Skye points out that the "Star Wars is just for boys" stereotype is fading, as the fan community is more often recognized as being diverse. "Star Wars will always be a reminder to me about the importance of being myself," concludes Skye.

Lillian Skye's parents—a great foundation in the Force.



TO BATTLE

James Hannon (the rebel) and John Kraemer (the TIE fighter pilot) competed in a national X-wing tournament called The Kessel Run, hosted by Fantasy Flight Games. "As the game pits X-wings against TIE fighters, it was just natural for us to make an appearance in costume," says Hannon. "As an aside, I came in second in the event playing as the rebels, and won a model of Boba Fett's Slave I."





TO YOUR FAVORITE TATTOO ARTIST

Darth Maul (as originally painted by Will Wilson in *Star Wars Art: Visions*) by tattoo artist Mike J, and sugar skull Boba Fett by Christian at Big Deluxe Tattoo. Aaron Gallegos of Utah provides the skin.



Tattoo on Thom Bulman of New York, by artist Tom Sherman of Divine Chaos Tattoo.



VADERING

Nar Shaddaa Base of the Rebel Legion (Illinois & Wisconsin) invited the Midwest Garrison of the 501st Legion to a photoshoot in their area. "We had a ton of fun playing *Star Wars*," recalls Thomas "Crix" Turner, who sent in these photos.



TO A CONCERT WITH DARTH VADER

"At a *Star Wars* tribute concert, the Ohio 501st Garrison Darth Vader, Mark Gau, swung his lightsaber over my wife Jen's head during the finale, just before he exited," writes Jen's husband, Eric Siebeneck. "I had to get a picture of the two of them together after the show. Jen is the only member of our family who has not been seen in *Insider* yet." Consider that one checked off the list, Eric.



TO HANG OUT WITH FRIENDS

Members of the Southern California Garrison and Legion, at Long Beach Comic Con. Photo by Mark Edwards.



TO YOUR FAVORITE (GUNNER) CHAIR

Wez Burns of the 501st UK Garrison. "After a hard day's trooping at LEGOLand, even an Imperial gunner needs some downtime. Is there such a thing as R&R in the Empire?!"



SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Any original art, envelope art, comics, illustrations, news, stories, meeting information, or any materials voluntarily submitted become the property of *Bantha Tracks*.

No compensation will be given for voluntary submissions, and there is

no guarantee of publication. Submissions to *Bantha Tracks* will not be returned.

Each submission must include the creator's name, age, contact details, date the work was created, and a statement that the work is original,

and created by the person submitting it.

Send electronic files to banthatracks@starwars.com, or send your snail mail to *Bantha Tracks*, c/o Mary Franklin, P.O. Box 29901, San Francisco, CA 94129

WHERE IN THE GALAXY DO WE WANT TO GO?

Working on this edition of *Bantha Tracks* brought my recent, work-related Star Wars travels to mind. I am fortunate to travel for Lucasfilm—and even luckier that the travel includes meeting with Star Wars fans in addition to co-workers. Here is a photo journal featuring just a few of the locations traveled to, and the friends I've seen, in the first eight months of 2014!



JANUARY

THE LUCASFILM ARCHIVES AT SKYWALKER RANCH

When a team from Disney Japan came to California for work and research, LFL colleague Chris Argyropoulos and I took them to the Lucas archives at Skywalker Ranch. A day spent exploring those movie archives is always a big job bonus, but it's even better when seen through the eyes of new guests.



APRIL

ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA: RADIO DISNEY MUSIC AWARDS

SoCal Garrison stormtroopers did the work and carried the awards on the red carpet in Los Angeles, California.



ZAMBIA

Kaska and I, "The Enforcers," ready to play polo in Zambia, Africa. What does that have to do with my Lucasfilm job? All those miles from travel mean mileage tickets!



MAY

ROME

May the 4th, International Star Wars Day, at the Coliseum in Rome.



SWEDEN

When it's the first beautiful summer day of the year in Stockholm, be sure to have your meeting outdoors! Ingeli Hedberg and Andrew Walker from the Nordic Garrison, center, join me and my Nordic Disney colleagues for a meeting and dinner.



LONDON

Members of the U.K. Rebel Legion, with their new Chopper, at London Comic Con.



JUNE

GERMANY

Members of Star Wars Fans Nuremberg meet up in Munich to share their plans for future club projects and charity work.



JULY

SAN DIEGO

A little bit of the backstage story of Comic-Con International: San Diego: A few of the Mandalorian Mercs met me in my hotel room and covered my torso with duct tape to make a body mold for my upcoming Mandalorian armor. It's exciting that Mando armor might be in my future, and this was a very entertaining start to the process.



AUGUST

CHINA

At the China Joy video game show in Shanghai. Only the volume of the crowds surpassed the size of the huge pavilions.



SINGAPORE

Many thanks to the members of the Star Wars fan clubs in Singapore and Malaysia, as well as Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines, for meeting about process and plans in Singapore, by phone, and even in a Kuala Lumpur airport coffee shop. You helped make the most of that trip!

It's only the end of August, and coming up next is Toronto Fan Expo—in fact I'm in a plane on my way there as I write this editorial! With the autumn pop culture convention season and the release of *Star Wars Rebels* still to come this fall, who knows where else *Star Wars* will take us? For occasional snapshots and tweets about Star Wars fans around the world, check my Twitter posts at @MaryLFL.

Get In Tracks!
Mary Franklin, Editor,
Bantha Tracks



RED FIVE

J. W. RINZLER'S FIVE FAVORITE STAR WARS ENDINGS

ACCLAIMED STAR WARS AUTHOR
J. W. RINZLER CHOOSES FIVE ENDINGS—
THAT LEAD TO NEW BEGINNINGS!



1 CHARACTER "ENDING"

Ends are often beginnings. Case in point: Ben Kenobi. I love his "ending" in *A New Hope*. Darth Vader strikes him down and Ben, as promised, becomes more powerful than the Sith Lord could have imagined. How? Ben doesn't do anything particularly powerful afterward, at least not in the conventional sense. He doesn't lift up buildings or strike down Tarkin. He's powerful because he becomes a symbol of eternal spiritual life, therefore helping Luke move beyond his own fear of death. Like some initiations into mystery schools or tribes, the new initiate has to transcend death. Ben helps Luke to do that through his "ending."



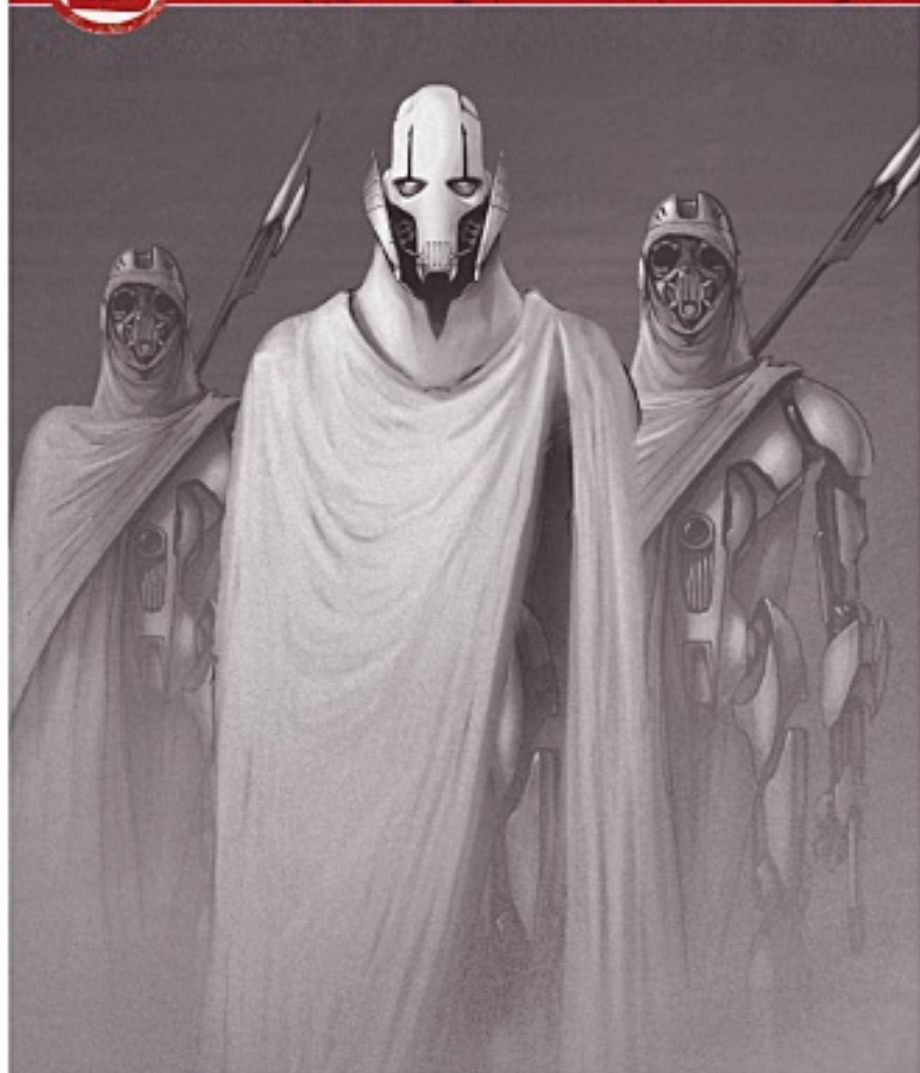
2 REAL-WORLD

There was a genuine, sadder ending here at Lucasfilm, which also meant a new beginning—when George Lucas announced that he'd sold Lucasfilm to Disney. That was quite a moment: George addressed the whole company. There were several standing ovations for George's amazing legacy of films, innovations, and as the boss we'd all worked for, along with a lot of mixed feelings and excitement as we entered a new era with Disney.





DESIGN



Seeing the end, or culmination, of the design process for General Grievous was a lot of fun. It was great seeing George come into the concept art department one day and say something like, "I need an iconic villain for Episode III." The next week all the artists had come up with fantastic ideas, but Warren Fu's had the most potential. A few meetings later, the designs for Grievous and his henchmen were pretty much fixed.



FILM

I've always loved the end of *A New Hope*. It's so incredibly exciting and upbeat, though it was a tad confusing to my young mind—where did Vader fly off to? My stepfather had to explain to me that Darth Vader would probably come back in the sequel. I had no idea what a sequel was back then... Little did I know then that... [see #5—Ed]



BOOK ENDINGS

...I'd end up writing a book about the making of that film—and the next two. Finishing up that trilogy of making-of books was a very happy moment for me, after about eight years of work.



MORE TO SAY

J. W. Rinzler's *The Making of Star Wars*, *The Making of The Empire Strikes Back* and *The Making of Return of the Jedi* are out now in print and enhanced e-book editions! Follow him on Twitter: @jwrinzler

HAVE YOU?



THE SAGA CONTINUES...

NEXT ISSUE



50

GREATEST REASONS TO LOVE THE *STAR WARS* TRILOGY!



VANESSA'S VIEW

Star Wars Rebels' Hera, aka, actress Vanessa Marshall writes exclusively for *Star Wars Insider*!



GIFT GUIDE!

What do you get for the *Star Wars* fan who has everything!? We have a few suggestions...



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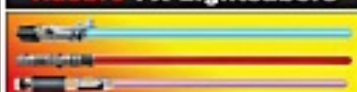


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